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SEEING FILMS PEDAGOGICALLY:

Exploring the pedagogical relation as depicted in film using postmodern strategies.

by

William James Paul ©

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

DEPARTMENT OF SECONDARY EDUCATION

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommended to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled "Seeing Films Pedagogically" submitted by William James Paul in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy.

Dr. Max van Manen, Supervisor, Department
of Secondary Education

John E. Oster

Dr. John Oster, Committee Member,
Department of Secondary Education

J. Jagodinsk

Dr. Jan Jagodzinski, Committee Member,
Department of Secondary Education

Pat Rafferty

Dr. Pat Rafferty, Committee Member,
Department of Elementary Education

Robert Burch

Dr. Robert Burch, Committee Member,
Department of Philosophy

J. Jagodzinski

Dr. Antoinette Oberg, External Reader,
University of Victoria

DATE: Jan 4 1993

DEDICATION

TO THE MEMORY OF WILLIAM JAMES PAUL

and

TO ANNE COOK PAUL

who as parents have taught me the value of being a teacher.

ROSES

Roses, that briefly live,
Joy is your dower--
Blest be the fates that give
one perfect hour--
And, though, too soon you die,
in your dust grows
Something the passer-by
Knows was a Rose.

Louise Moulton.

ABSTRACT

This exploratory study brings together interests in contemporary North American feature films, postmodern-deconstruction strategies, and the relation between educators and children (the pedagogical relation). This study addresses the question: What does a postmodernist exploration yield of contemporary films that focus either implicitly or explicitly on the pedagogical relation? Three contemporary feature films were employed as sources in order to explore qualities of the pedagogical relation.

Films were discussed as a narrative medium that provide for experiential understandings of the lived relations between adults and children. Films are particularly valuable in that they invite the viewer to reflect on the meanings of relations as depicted in the movies. The image of children in contemporary cinematography was discussed for its commercial and pedagogical significance.

The three films selected for this study were *Stand and Deliver* (Menendez, 1989), *Dead Poets Society* (Weir, 1989), *Madame Sousatzka* (Schlesinger, 1988). A selective application of postmodern-deconstruction strategies was utilized in order to bring experiential understandings of contemporary educational relations between a teacher and his or her students into reflective articulation. The films were subjected to three different readings.

First there was an interrupted reading of the film as a narrative text. This reading began the transformation of visual text to written text. The reflective interruptions were used to point to emergent themes. The second reading featured critical commentaries on the film by movie connoisseurs. These commentaries were used to further enhance the indication of which themes were emerging as noteworthy. The three themes that became the focus of this study were pedagogical subjectivity, responsibility, and intentionality. Third, these themes derived from reading one and two became the focus of a deconstructive analysis. Finally, a pedagogical interpretation was constructed of the material yielded by the various readings.

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Simply, this dissertation is the product of a process influenced by many people. To everyone involved with me in shaping this project, THANK YOU.

Specifically, my deepest appreciation to my committee -- Dr. Jan Jagodzinski, Dr. John Oster, Dr. Pat Rafferty, Dr. Robert Burch, and Dr. Antoinette Oberg (External).

Significantly, I must express my deepest gratitude to my Supervisor Dr. Max van Manen for his pedagogical sensitivity and tactful guidance.

Singularly, none of the process leading to this product could have been possible without the support of my family -- Monica and Janay.

To believe something not yet proved
and to underwrite it with our lives,
it is the only way we can leave the future open.
Lillian Smith.

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CHAPTER ONE

BRINGING TOGETHER INTERESTS IN THE PEDAGOGICAL RELATION, FILM, AND POSTMODERNIST THINKING

All I have to go on is something I caught a glimpse of out of the corner of my eye. (John Updike.)

Introduction

There is often something special in the nature of the relation between a teacher, his or her students, and the subject matter at hand. As students and as teachers we know this relation experientially. When teachers share stories about their teaching, the quality of the teacher-student relationship often constitutes the heart and soul of their discussions. When one is privy to gatherings where teachers share personal-professional stories there seems to be overwhelming narrative evidence that even the most confident and experienced teacher can have his or her world immediately turned upside down as the result of the doubting and questioning arising from a problematic relation with just one student. Is there something inherent in the nature or structure of a teacher's educative relation with his or her students that brings on this recurring questioning of professional expertise and this doubting of personal self?

Indeed, there seems inherit in the educative relation a decidedly unstable and normative quality that calls upon a teacher to doubt or question his or her personal and professional competencies. What is remarkable about such a conception of the educative relation is that when it is positive and fulfilling for both student and teacher the relational qualities that come to the fore are instructive with respect to how one could be with others. A strong educative relation teaches us something. And yet when there is a lack of a good educative relation, which may result in a certain relational and educational poverty between a teacher and his or her student, this "lacking" can prove to be instructive for a pedagogically sensitive teacher. The lack of a good educative relation teaches us something.

Most teachers are continually being called upon to face, via reflective self-questioning of both his or her successes and failures, the antinomic and pedagogic nature[1] of the relations he or she has with others and to life itself. If we concede that there is always something pedagogic at work in the educative relation, then what happens when this relation must exist within a societal-cultural epoch bent on eradicating uncertainty, flux, or anything deemed to have unstable qualities in favor of a way of knowing life that is predictable, controlled, and stable? This research project is an attempt to suggest that by being responsively responsible to self, others, and the lifeworld[2] of teaching, we as human beings and as teachers are called upon to continually and reflectively make sense of life's lessons taught.

As a teacher of other people's children and as a parent of my daughter Janay Nicole (born September 23, 1990) I have developed an interest in the nature of the educative relation and in contemporary understandings of how we, as adults and parents, should live with and educate our children. In exploring this overriding interest I seek to set a good example--to offer, to show, and to give voice to an understanding of what it means to engage in a strong, oriented, trustful, and hopeful relationship with children.

> Indeed, as we ask ourselves what it means to belong to this earth, we must seriously ask ourselves what it means to belong to our children. Living at the turn of a new millennium poses unforeseen and unforeseeable challenges to parents and to teachers and other professional educators. ... Some of these realities will be exciting and positive experiments in human living. But we must recognize also that spheres of human intimacy increasingly come under strain from consumer, economic, bureaucratic, corporate, and political technologies and ideologies. The

---

[1] The word "antinomy" is traceable to the Greek *anti* meaning against and *nomos* meaning law. The word "pedagogic" is traceable to the Greek *paidos* meaning child and *agogos* meaning to lead. Life possesses certain qualities. These qualities are often inherently self-contradictory and often irreconcilable. Such is the antinomic nature of Life. But pedagogy also reflects and embodies certain qualities which are antinomic. It is the antinomic qualities of pedagogy that come into play during our relations with others. As a result there is often a doubting of our present educative relationship with others. When this doubting is reflectively encountered we are often lead to the question: how might we be better with others?

[2] The word "lifeworld" (*Lebenswelt*) refers to the world of human lived experience. See van Manen (1990), pp. 182, 183.

> notion of education, conceived as a living process of personal engagement between an adult teacher or parent and a young child or student, may well disappear in an increasingly managerial, corporate, and technicized environment. How can educating and bringing up children remain a rich and cultural activity? (van Manen, 1991, pp. 3, 4)

Chapter One attempts to establish an initial conceptualization of the pedagogical relation between a teacher and his or her students.[3] Next it is argued that contemporary cinematography offers a resourceful site that frames a reflective and representative space to study the presence and absence of the pedagogical relation. Finally it is claimed that a postmodernist perspective[4] provides analytical possibilities, via deconstruction strategies, with respect to bringing interests in the pedagogical relation, film, and contemporary society together in such a way as to be constructively productive.

Connecting the pedagogical relation, film, and postmodernist thinking

This project attempts to bring together three interests. First, I take a lead offered by van Manen (1991) who suggests that a way to explore the meaning of pedagogy is to inquire about its structure.[5]

> In what ways do we experience pedagogy in everyday life? In other words, what is the existential structure of this experience? In its most elemental form we may make a distinction between pedagogical situations, pedagogical relations, and pedagogical actions. Pedagogical situations are those circumstances or conditions that constitute the site of pedagogical actions and that make pedagogical experiences between adults and children possible. Pedagogical situations in turn are constituted by special affective pedagogical relations between adults and children, to which both

---

[3] The term "pedagogical relation" is borrowed from the work of Max van Manen. See van Manen (1991), pp. 71-78.

[4] This project considers the term "postmodernism" to be synonymous with "post-structuralism." Certainly the two terms are not identical. However, Sarup (1989) indicates the differences seem to come down to questions of emphasis as opposed to substance. Post-structuralism is a focus on specific methodological and epistemological questions regarding language, discourse, text, meaning, and symbols. Postmodernism, on the other hand, is oriented to questions regarding larger cultural issues.

[5] The word "pedagogy" is NOT used here as it has become connotatively defined by Western positivistic-orientated discourses. These discourses have synonymously linked pedagogy with a conceitful teacher's pedantic and dogmatic orientation toward learning and his or her students. Contrary to that definition this project favors a way of understanding pedagogy that is more faithful to the word's root *agogy*. This means that a teacher-student relation is pedagogic if it is a relation orientated on the teacher's part toward a helpful, leading, supportive, caring, and educative way of being with children. Van Manen (1990) defines pedagogy as "the activity of teaching, parenting, educating, or generally living with children, that requires constant practical acting in concrete situations and relations" (p. 2). With respect to the structure of pedagogy as a way to explore pedagogic qualities see van Manen (1991), pp. 65-82.

> the adult and the child bring the necessary requisites. Pedagogical actions are the experiences between pedagogues and children, in which both adults and children are actively and intentionally involved and through which a special influence flows from the adult to the child. (van Manen, 1991, p. 71.)

Although this research project selects to focus on the pedagogical relation[6] it will not forget that the pedagogical relation is but one enabling structural requisite of a pedagogical experience. Still to focus on the pedagogical relation does offer one way of exploring the meaning of pedagogy itself.

> We must ask, then, what pedagogical relation is possible between a teacher and the students in his or her charge? First, we need to emphasize that the relation of teacher to students differs from the parent-child relation in a fundamental respect in that it is always a triadic relation: It is a relation between teacher and student in which both are oriented to a certain subject matter (mathematics, language, science, for example) and to the world with which this subject matter is concerned. The parent-child relation tends to be more diadic: primarily a person-to-person relationship. But, of course, parents too are teaching their children to live in the world. Another obvious difference between the pedagogical relation of teachers and parents is that the teacher-student relation is temporary (even though a child may remember an outstanding teacher for life) while the relation between parent and child is lifelong. (van Manen, 1991, p. 76)

The pedagogical relation is best described as that relation which exists between a parent and a child, or between a teacher and a student, and which emerges in certain conditions possessing special qualities as well as being pregnant with certain possibilities. More specifically van Manen (1991) moves to outline some of the necessary requisites and qualities for the pedagogical relation:

> First, then, the pedagogical relation between teacher and students differs from other possible relations an adult may have with a child, such as friendship, commerce, etc. ... The teacher's pedagogical relation is a relation *in loco parentis*. The teacher is oriented to students in terms of orienting the students to the subject matters that give school learning its pedagogical significance. In turn, the students need to accept the pedagogue's charge as "teacher"; otherwise the learning process loses its footing. It needs to be realized as well that the pedagogical relation between teacher and student cannot be compelled or coerced. A teacher cannot force the student to accept him or her as teacher--ultimately that recognition must be won from, granted by the student.
>
> Second, the pedagogical relation between teacher and students requires a two-way intentional relationship. The teacher intends the students to learn and grow with respect to the kinds of things that the teacher teaches. In turn, the students need to

---

[6] The term "the pedagogical relation" grows from the work of the Western European tradition of "human science pedagogy" (the Dilthey-Nohl School). Some significant works (in English) which address the idea of a pedagogical relation are: Spiecker (1984), Bollnow (1987, 1988), and van Manen (1991, 1992).

> have a desire, a willingness, and a preparedness to learn. Without this "readiness to learn" nothing of consequence will be learnt. Naturally, to some extent the teacher can interest a child or young person in certain subject matters. But we need to consider that "readiness to learn" is a complex matter that entails more than cognitive maturity or motivated readiness.
> Third, the pedagogic relation between teacher and student has a special personal quality. The teacher does not just pass on a body of knowledge to the students, he or she embodies what is taught in a personal way. ... It is a great challenge for teachers, therefore, to mediate the subject matter they teach in a personal way and to involve themselves personally with students. This does not mean that the teacher necessarily has to maintain one-to-one relations with every one of his or her students, but it does mean that the teacher is there in a personal way for those students. (pp. 76-78)

Like many practicing teachers I have experienced the pedagogical relation. But how is it possible in a research context to speak of or to show the features of the pedagogical relation as that special, two-way intentional, personal activity that happens between a teacher, his or her students, and the subject matter at hand?

Traditional educational research orientations (especially those rooted in positivism and empiricism) do offer instruments to observe and make accountable teacher behavior and student performance. But the pedagogic relational qualities that exist between a teacher and his or her student, do not lend themselves very well to empirically measurable instances.

> [A positivistic orientation] fails to see that the meaning and significance of pedagogy remains concealed as a consequence of the theoretical overlays and perspectival frameworks we construct in the paradoxical effort to see more clearly the significance of certain pedagogical practices. To the extent that we are trapped by a positivistic perspective we confuse the meaning of teaching or parenting with what we see teachers or parents *do*. ... But in a deep sense too positivism fails ... to see the absence of pedagogy by mistaking concrete descriptions or case studies of teaching with what constitutes its ground. It fails to see that in a deep sense pedagogy absents or "hides" itself by virtue of its own activity: in the process of showing itself it also shows its hidden character. (van Manen, 1990, p. 149)

For the purposes of this study cinematographic sources will be employed in order to explore the presence and absence of the pedagogical relation. A postmodern perspective will be adopted to critically open reflective spaces in which the qualities of the pedagogical relation as manifest in modern film might be explored and made debatable.

There are many North American feature films that show teachers and students in educational situations. Some of these films are classified by film critics, parents, and educators as contrived, unrealistic, or simply exploitive "Hollywood" depictions of educative relations. Such films may serve as useful negative examples of our Western understandings of and attitudes towards adult-child educative relations. But there are also other films, generally considered more positive and realistic, that critics, parents, and educators point to as being reasonable examples of adult-child educative relations. What might be revealed by exploring these films? What might be revealed by exploring (seeing) films pedagogically?

Methodologically this research project draws me to the postmodernists.[7] That is to those European and North American scholars who have sought to critically map the existential and somatic terrains of the Western-industrial world. However, it becomes evident very quickly after reading postmodernist texts and critiques of these texts that having an interest in postmodernist thinking is the easy part. Coming to a workable understanding of postmodernist thinking is a more slippery task.

> It becomes more and more difficult ... to specify exactly what it is that "postmodernism" is supposed to refer to as the term gets stretched in all directions across different debates, different disciplinary and discursive boundaries, as different factions seek to make it their own, using it to designate a plethora of incommensurable objects, tendencies, emergencies. When it becomes possible for people to describe as "postmodern" the decor of a room, the design of a building, the diagesis of a film, the construction of a record, or a "scratch" video, a television commercial, or an arts documentary, or the "intertextual" relations between them, the layout of a page in a fashion magazine or critical journal, an anti-teleological tendency within epistemology, the attack on the "metaphysics of presence", a general attenuation of feeling, the collective chagrin and morbid projections of a post-War generation of baby boomers confronting middle age, the "predicament" of reflexivity, a group of rhetorical tropes, a proliferation of surfaces, a new phase in commodity fetishism, a fascination for images, codes and styles, a process of cultural, political, or existential fragmentation and/or crisis, the "de-centering" of the subject, an "incredulity toward metanarratives", the replacement of unitary power axis by a plurality of power/discourse formations, the "implosion of meaning", the collapse of cultural hierarchies, the dread engendering by the threat of nuclear self-destruction, the decline of the university, the functioning and effects of new miniaturised technologies, broad societal and economic shifts into a "media", "consumer" or "multinational" phase, a sense (depending on who you read) of "placelessness" or the abandonment of placelessness ("critical

---

[7] See Silverman (1990), pp. 300-314. Silverman provides a thorough bibliography of current books, articles in books, journals, and articles in journals on the topic of postmodernism. As well see Rosenau (1992), pp. xi-xiv. Rosenau provides a well-documented outline of postmodern terminology.

> regionalism") or (even) a generalised substitution of spatial temporal co-ordinates--when it becomes possible to describe all these things as "postmodern" (or more simply, using a current abbreviation, as "post" or "very post") then it's clear we are in the presence of a buzzword. (Hebdige, 1988, pp. 181, 182)

These multiple aspects of postmodernism are "evidence" enough for some scholars to declare postmodernist thinking a meaningless and, therefore, a useless and, consequently, a dead term. I do not agree. Rather, I side with Hebdige who observes the following:

> The more complexly and contradictory nuanced a word is, the more likely it is to have formed the focus for historically significant debates, to have occupied a semantic ground in which something precious and important was felt to be embedded. ... the degree of semantic complexity and overload surrounding the term "postmodernism" at the moment signals that a significant number of people with conflicting interest and opinions feel that there is something sufficiently important at stake here to be worth struggling and arguing over. (Hebdige, 1988, p. 182)

Caputo (1988) argues that postmodernist thinking, at its deepest, is a responsive awareness to modernity's increasingly problematical encounters with "otherness". Postmodernist thinking offers a way of being response-able to the often muted, yet ever-present, call of that which has been other-wise precluded, secluded, and excluded in modernity's vision of scientific-technological progress. Although postmodernist thinking is still some distance from establishing a significant presence in the arenas of artistic, philosophical, political, economic, cultural, or institutional activities in the North American context, it does offer (a) an awareness of the excluded other, and (b) a way to establish a space for the other to surface through strategies that "marginalize, delimit, disseminate, and decenter the primary (and often secondary) works of modernist and premodernist cultural inscriptions" (Silverman, 1990, p. 1).

> Postmodernist thinking offers to re-read the very texts and traditions that have made premodernist and modernist writing possible--but above all it offers a reinscription of those very texts and traditions by examining the respects in which they set limits to their own enterprises, in which they incorporate other texts and traditions in a juxtapositional and intertextual relation to themselves. Postmodernist thinking involves rethinking--finding the places of difference within texts and institutions, examining the inscriptions of indecidability, noting the dispersal of signification, identity, and centered unity across a plurivalent texture of epistemological and metaphysical knowledge production. (Silverman, 1990, p. 1)

Is it possible that by utilizing selected strategies inherent in postmodernist thinking there is a possibility to open up for discussion modern institutional educative relations as depicted in contemporary feature films? Is it possible that this form of analysis can be pedagogically constructive and instructive? My hope is that these two questions can be responded to in the affirmative.

In summary, this research project suggests that to bring together the three specific interests outlined here may further a dialogue regarding the nature of pedagogy itself. The first interest is in the pedagogical relation. By exploring the qualities of the pedagogical relation there is a possibility to catch glimpses of the nature of pedagogy itself. The second interest is in film. Because of the dearth of writings in English about the pedagogical relation, film may be used as a site that provides possibilities to "see" the presence and the absence of the pedagogical relation. The third interest is in postmodernist thinking. Such thinking may offer strategies that in turn may create opportunities to explore modern educational relations in a pedagogical way. By bringing the three interests together this project attempts to show that when living within a pedagogical relation a teacher, as the adult responsible, is continually called upon to respond to the question of how his or her students are to learn that life is often indeterminate, unpredictable, and influenced by unforeseen circumstances. Still these contingent qualities of life also provide each adult and child, within limits, the relationally pedagogic opportunity to create better possible worlds. An exploration of the pedagogical relation via film from a postmodernist stance may prove to be instructive in this regard.

The project's orienting question

During the fall of 1989, as a graduate student at the University of Alberta in the Department of Secondary Education, I was enrolled in Ed. C. I. 698; *The Nature of Pedagogy*. This course was concerned with the reflective and pre-reflective processes of teaching, childcare and pedagogy. Specifically the notions of our pedagogical origins, the nature of pedagogical moments, forms of pedagogical understandings, pedagogical thoughtfulness and tact, and other concerns pertaining to everyday pedagogical thinking and acting were a focus of the course. In an attempt to explore the ineffable layers of meaning regarding the pedagogical relation Max van Manen utilized cinematographic sources as an interpretive method. Struck by this approach of raising issues in a pedagogical manner and making emergent themes pedagogically debatable led me to a personal and professional attempt to know more about pedagogy, cinema, and postmodernist thinking and subsequently to my orienting question: *What does a postmodernist exploration reveal of contemporary films that focus either implicitly or explicitly on the pedagogical relation*?

A further exploration of the project's three interests

What follows is an expanded statement of intent regarding the three interests--the pedagogical relation, film, and postmodernist thinking.

The pedagogical relation

The concept of the pedagogical relationship as the foundation of a theory of education is rooted in Western European *Geisteswissenschaftliche* pedagogy.[8] Dilthey, in advocating the proper subject matter for an educational *Geisteswissenschaften*, indicated very little construction could begin upon such a project until there was a deeper understanding of the qualities inherent in the foundational relationship between a teacher and his or her students. Herman Nohl, Dilthey's student in the Germany of the 1930s, took up this challenge.

Nohl advanced three qualifying characterizations of the pedagogical relation. (1) The first characterization is itself three fold in that the relation is inherently personal, spontaneous, and special. A personal relation emerges between two people--an adult-teacher and a child-student. A spontaneous relation cannot be formulated as a prescriptive theory or practice. A special relation is not reducible to other human relations such as love, friendship, or mentorship. (2) The pedagogical relation possesses and is possessed by a sense of doubled lived time (temporality) and lived space (spatiality). The teacher reflectively cares for and instructs the student in the present as that student stands in her or his childhood space, and the teacher, as an adult, also has a guiding sense for what the student might become, and offers the student opportunities to realize the possibilities. (3) In the pedagogical relation the teacher must be able to see and to understand significant moments, situations, and events from the perspective of the child, and embedded in that recognition of the child's subjectivity is the awareness on the part of the teacher of his or her responsibility to create interactive spaces for the child to move from the dependence and reliance on the teacher and towards greater self-autonomy and self-responsibility. Nohl argues that the pedagogical relation is personal, spontaneous, and special. Within the relation, the teacher as an adult responsibly attends to the child's subjectivity and also intends to create opportunities for a child to become an adult. The child brings to the relation a willingness to be led into adulthood by a caring and insightful teacher. The pedagogical relation may influence a student over his or her entire lifetime.

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[8] See van Manen (1990), pp. 2-4.

Continuing within the European context Spiecker (1984) makes a contribution to an understanding of the pedagogical relation. In taking up the question of the link between parenting and teaching Spiecker suggests that life's initial relation between a mother and a newborn infant offers an indicator of the qualities embodied in the pedagogical relation. Utilizing both sociological and psychological data, Spiecker indicates that at a child's birth adults (especially birth mothers) attend to that child in a way which is quite different than occurs in other human relations like commerce, love, friendship, or mentorship. In these relations, for the most part, the exchange is between relatively independent, choice-making participants. For Spiecker the difference between other relations and the pedagogical relation is based upon the notion of "contrafactuals". A contrafactual is guided by an "as if" condition; that is through spoken and non-spoken language the mother interacts with the child as if to already presume the child's intentions. A parent interacts with the child as if he or she were already capable of more mature thoughts and intentions. As a parent acts with and speaks to the child, he or she teaches the child to actualize his or her assumed human potentials. Spiecker's claim is that such a way of being present to a child illustrates emphatically that the pedagogical relation is a relation *sui generis* (one of a kind). The pedagogical relation is a special educative relation between an adult and a child which although influenced by variable cultural, economic, political, and social values and conditions cannot be solely determined by such conditions. Much of what constitutes the human condition is that an adult teaches his or her children to become adults in each governing culture and in every guiding society.

> Young children were, and are, initiated into different ways of life and into different world pictures. This does not mean ... that the conditions under which human development and "becoming a person" take place differ from each other fundamentally. An infant belongs to the human race because he is spoken to *as if* he were already a person, *as if* he already possessed speech, *as if* his behavior were already intentional. ... the development from interaction to communication and dialogue is not a natural one: human development, becoming a person, is only possible in the pedagogical relationship which, because of its one-sided contrafactual character, is a relationship *sui generis.* (Spiecker, 1984, p. 209)

And also within the European context Bollnow (1989a, 1989b, 1989c) contributes to an understanding of the concept of the pedagogical relation as part of his exploration of the notion of pedagogical atmosphere.

> It seems to me that within the concept of the pedagogical atmosphere there is hidden a foundational, still undifferentiated, but therefore all encompassing view within which the concretely and actively grounded pedagogical relation can develop itself. (Bollnow, 1989a, p. 6)

Bollnow begins his exploration of the pedagogical relation with a reference to Pestalozzi. Pestalozzi's work features a strong vision of the child and suggests there exists a special foundational relationship between adult and child. Central to this relation are qualities such as love and trust, thankfulness and obedience. However, Pestalozzi's terms remained somewhat vague. Bollnow attempts to flesh them out. In doing so he suggests there is a double-sided nature to the pedagogical relation.

> [In] the bringing up of children ... two important interdependent and reciprocal directions are discernible. One is the affective or emotional disposition of the child toward the adult, the other, the corresponding orientation which the adult brings toward the child. ... The special sentient feelings that the child needs to muster for the sake of a positive or healthy growth need to be met by a corresponding set of sentient feelings on the part of the adult. These affective feelings include the adult's love and trust in dealing with children. And they lead to a fusing of the relationship which will make it difficult to keep the perspectives of the child and adult separate. Yet, in the perspective of the adult, these feelings take on quite a different meaning which we must try to articulate and which therefore requires special handling.
> To the quality of the pedagogic relation belongs a reflective sense of the Good, a sense of the meaning of being human, a sense of hope for the personal becoming of the child, and finally, an untiring sense of patience to hold the expectations and other requirements of the adult in check. (Bollnow, 1989b, p. 9, 11)

Finally, van Manen (1991) contributes to the concept of the pedagogical relation by surveying and extending the work of the European scholars Nohl, Spiecker, and Bollnow. Van Manen's theoretical work, via scholarly papers, is important as it introduces the concept of the pedagogical relation into North American educational discourses. Van Manen's practical work, via a phenomenological methodology, provides illustrative anecdotes showing the "necessary requisites" of the pedagogical relation in the practices of North American teachers. He names the pedagogical relation as a viable and virtuous endeavor for both theoretical and practical research within the context of North American education. Van Manen's work also shows that pedagogy's ineffable nature does not lend itself to positivistic measurement instances. His phenomenological explorations of the pedagogical relation are important because they give voice to, and let us see, specifically in each and every moment of every day in classrooms throughout this nation that there are teachers and students living within the motivating power and spiritual vitality of this special relation.

The work to date on the concept of the pedagogical relation, excluding that of van Manen (1991), has been most extensively been put forward in the dialogues of Western European, especially Dutch and German, scholars. In order for most North Americans (including myself) to follow the European pedagogical debates about the pedagogical relation, translations are the only theoretical source. Certainly the translation process itself must raise questions about semantical appropriateness, rhetorical continuity, and theoretical connectivity. This is a problem. But it does not disqualify the pedagogical relation as something worth exploring with respect to the North American educational context. Nor does it discourage a North American educator from questioning what is currently understood or misunderstood about the pedagogical relation.

In the North American context the exploration of the pedagogical relation faces many challenges. Hegemonic in the West is a consciousness that reflects, implicitly and explicitly in theory and in practice, the governing societal and cultural meta-discourses founded in instrumental reason. Within such a governing condition, where meaning is defined in positivistic, empirical, and performative terms, something as ineffable in nature and fragile in character as the pedagogical relation is not readily made into a marketable commodity, nor an object for fruitful research. So it is of little wonder that a Western-European concept of the pedagogical relation would seem to be of limited value to North American educational discourses. (Mis)Understood and (re)framed within a positivistic stance, the pedagogical relation is easily branded as something mystical, irrational, and impractical.

Yet there seems to exist ever increasing openings in North American educational discourses that reflect the general conditions of flux presently occurring in Western-industrial thought and practice. Things are not as they have seemed to have been. The Western-industrial world, once conceived of as stable, fixed, potentially accountable, and manageable is experiencing a foundational trembling. This is evident in every Western institution--be it social, cultural, economic, educational, religious, or political. Specifically in the search for alternatives within the institution of education, what are the possibilities offered by being open to an exploration of the pedagogical relation? It may well be that the very fluidity of the pedagogical relation's origins and its current, and perhaps continuous, unsettled definition will prove to be its most intriguing feature for North American educators. An exploration of the pedagogical relation may offer an opportunity to explore a different way in which we as parents and as teachers in the North American educational community may come to encounter and understand our children today and tomorrow.

To review, the pedagogical relation comes to life through the relational interplay of several necessary requisites. The work of Nohl, Spiecker, Bollnow, and van Manen attempts to outline and show these requisites.[9] Descriptive narrative tellings and showings offer a way to explore the qualities of the pedagogical relation. Such tellings offer themselves as examples to show that the pedagogical relation may not only be seen, heard, and felt, but that even in second-hand re-tellings (re-showings) there is a sense of pedagogy evident in that the re-tellings also offer themselves as instructive exemplars. As this project seeks to "see" the presence and absence of the pedagogical relation via contemporary feature films, as descriptive narrative re-tellings, it will be an attempt primarily guided by the necessary requisites outlined by van Manen. Still this project also seeks to make problematical the concept of the pedagogical relation. In doing so this project names three broad inquiry areas regarding the pedagogical relation as gleaned from the work of Nohl, Spiecker, Bollnow, and van Manen.

First, to inquire into the nature of the pedagogical relation seems to require an exploration of teacher and student subjectivity. How a teacher encounters and interprets the experiences of a child is deeply connected to who the teacher feels, thinks, and knows this child is and, in addition, who the teacher feels, thinks, and knows he or she is himself or herself. What is remarkable about being aware of this link between a child's subjectivity and a teacher's subjectivity is that it leads to the understanding that a teacher's coming to know and understand his or her own subjectivity is often brought into question by the child's growing sense of self within the bounds of attempting to discover what it means to be an adult. If a teacher understands this relational tension between his or her subjectivity and that of the child's subjectivity, does that not enable a more immediate, interactive, and educative relation between adult and child?

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[9] See van Manen (1991), pp. 72-78.

A second inquiry flows from the first. To wonder about subjectivity is to be brought experientially and existentially to face the question of other. In a teaching relation it is the child, as the significant other, who is the one primarily calling upon the teacher to act as a teacher and to be a teacher?

> The human being is not alone. ... In the world we experience the other person. There are other people who live beside me. There are others whom I encounter in the world. The question is: How do the others appear to me? Are they there simply for me, as parts of my larger world? ... Are the others just there as objects for the satisfaction of my wants and needs: to be used, manipulated, made available by me and to me? ... I do not really experience the subjectivity of the other until I am able to overcome the centeredness of my self in the world. The fascinating fact is that my possibility of the experience of the otherness of other, resides in my experience of the vulnerability of the other. (van Manen, 1991, pp. 139, 140)

If being called upon by a child in turn calls upon a teacher to be aware of both the child's subjectivity and the teacher's subjectivity, then also at play in this call is the requirement placed upon the teacher for a pedagogical response to the encounter of self via the call of the other. The other, as a child, embodies a call that a teacher must be responsively responsible to. If a teacher understands that the child has a subjective lifeworld, just as a teacher does, is not that teacher, in the light of this awareness, required to encounter a child and the child's world as thoughtfully and tactfully as possible? Is this not how a teacher would have others encounter and guide him or her if he or she were a child? Is to be vulnerable to the other also to be responsive to and responsible for the other?

A third inquiry flows from wondering about a teacher's subjectivity and the call to be responsively responsible for the other--the child--as a subjective being. Specifically what are a teacher's intentions, as an adult, toward the child in her or his present condition and future space? If a teacher understands a child's experiences of the world in his or her (approximate) subjective terms and a teacher is called upon to act and be with that child in a pedagogically responsible and thoughtfully tactful manner, then there must be some understanding of what a teacher intends for that child today and tomorrow.

> On the one hand, the reflective awareness of our pedagogical intents enables us to make our pedagogical lives conversationally available: debatable, accountable, evaluable. And to the extent that we must assume responsibility for the child's as yet immature ability to be reflectively involved in his or her own educational process, we need to speak also for the child. Naturally the latter responsibility is an extremely sensitive undertaking, easily mishandled or abused by the adult. On the other hand, the living quality of the pedagogical intent is much more consequential than intent as an intellectual statement of any purpose we may have with respect to the child's situation or future. The pedagogical intent is also the expression of our fundamental experience of encountering this child as another person who has entered our life, who has a claim on us, who has transformed our life. In this latter sense, the pedagogical intent can be seen as a stirring responsiveness to which we find ourselves called in facing this child. (van Manen, 1991, pp. 19, 20)

In conclusion, this research project suggests that the pedagogic relation is a viable and vital area of scholarly exploration. Despite the lack of quantifiable availability to positivistic research agendas, the pedagogical relation may be understood, at least in part, as an inter-play among the necessary requisites outlined by van Manen and others. In the lifeworld of teaching, teachers and students know and benefit from the educative vitality of this relation. Still the pedagogical relation must be explored, both in theory and in practice, as if it were problematical. Exploring questions of subjectivity, responsibility, and intentionality should open the concept of the pedagogical relation to dialogical debates.

Film

Film making is a recent technological phenomenon[10] that borrows much from other forms of expression such as painting, photography, sculpture, dance, music, drama, and literature. Beyond utilizing aspects of these other forms of expression, the cinematographic expression seeks to perfect its own kind of experience. The cinematographic experience extends, honors, and privileges a visual orientation to the world. But cinematography does so in such a way as to provide, upon the moment seen, an immediate somatic (kinesthetically fleshy) bonding of sights and sounds that often move us.

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[10] See Cook (1985), pp. 2-56. Cook offers a review of the history of the cinema in North America. He covers in detail the period from 1891 when Thomas Edison first took out patents for the Kinetograph and the Kinetoscope through to the Hollywood star system of the late 1980s.

Yet despite film's evocative transforming power there must be an awareness of the link between what film *is* and what it can *do*. And what a film does is directly linked to its life as an end-product. Film, as an end-product, presents itself in such a way that all the intervening fictional processes of the apparatuses, the procedures, and the techniques of filming and editing are made to seem invisible. Evidence abounds of our emotional involvement and intellectual curiosity with skillfully constructed cinematographic expressions. Audiences are moved to experience an awareness of time(s) and space(s) both present and distant, intimate and public. We often find ourselves in the presence of a moving picture at which we laugh with joy, uneasiness or relief, or cry in pain, sorrow or empathy. If a film does not possess this illusionary property of being unified, then movie goers tend to complain. The plot is disjointed and fractured. Perhaps the acting is blatant and superficial. Or it could be that the style is too incongruent or interventionist. Simply, we have a reaction to the action.

This attempt to make films appear seamless only enhances the fact that films are essentially cinematographic and societal constructions. In exploring this notion of construction, and attempting to show what a film is, the work of three scholars is especially relevant.

Cook (1985), in an overview of the last 100 years of the cinema, indicates that films have been seen from a variety of perspectives--aesthetic, sociological, economic (Marxist), psychological (Freud, Jung, Lacan), industrial, technological, authorial, and so on. This evidence, highlighting different ways to see film, suggests that embedded in the cinematographic process there are webs and knots of complex life relations that are often interconnected in multiple, contradictory, and diffuse arrangements. Although many of these relations are selectively edited in creating the film as an end-product they, nevertheless, remain with the film in their exclusion. Understanding the influence in absence of such relations may be helpful in showing how it is possible that looking at a film may lead to often equally legitimate but different interpretations. Although this research project does not seek to explore the nature and extent of every influence on the conditions of production or consumption of films in Western culture, it does accept Cook's suggestion that film exists as a cultural and cinematographic construction. Film is a construction reflective and representative of both that which is present and that which is absent in modern Western thought and practice.

Chatman (1990) indicates that the primary text-types of modern literature are Exposition, Description, Argumentation-Persuasion, and Narration. Beyond the grey areas where one text-type blends into another the "normal" relation between one text-type and another requires one type to act in the service of the other. This arrangement is not due to any intrinsic properties of one type over another. Rather a text utilizes one over-riding text-type because of the pragmatics of the author's intent and the function of that text within a society. Chatman (1990) suggests that to extend this understanding of text-type analysis to cinema results in an awareness that although cinema is dominated by narrative characteristics the other text-types are also present. In this regard Chatman's work, as extended to cinema, indicates that what is present is constructed upon what is absent. Although this research project does not seek to explore in depth the state of affairs historically and currently with respect to the tension between text-types in the Western world, it does accept Chatman's suggestion that film exists as a site of textual tensions. In a seemingly unified, purposeful, and single visioned film there are stories not told, deferred, and excluded.

From Cook's perspective film is a cinematographic construction that reflects and represents the complexities of Western cultural and societal life. From Chatman's perspective film is a textual construction that reflects and represents the tensions of Western cultural and societal stories. Reinforcing both of these positions, Wurzer and Silverman (1990) indicate that:

> Filming is the activity which renders into film what is not film. It is not the machines (projectors, cameras, and video-editors) which technologically produce film. Filming is the making different of that which is not film into that which is film. In its spacing, differencing, textualizing, filming is the production of films in a filmic language that has become text.[11] (p. 185)

Film is an intensified experiential form of art within which the real and imagined probabilities and possibilities of social and cultural life (past, present, and future) is selectively framed. Combining elements of the work of Cook, Chatman, and Wurzer and Silverman offers a way of seeing (interpreting) film as a frame that, in inscriptive constructed form, represents the sights and sounds of modernity's practices and relationships. To see and interpret film as a selectively constructed storied picture of life's sights and sounds tends to keep before the audience the understanding that film represents what is there as seen, said, and thought regarding contemporary life. But also, and significantly so, the film presents what is not there as that which is unseen, unsaid, and unthought regarding contemporary life.

To read film as if it were a unified narrative text does not preclude bringing forward for discussion the tension between what a film does in terms of what its authors' intentions are and what a film is in terms of its inherently gappy construction. This is not to suggest this project, as my specific reading of films, wants to fall into the "cause and effect" form of doing research that is associated with positivistic film studies. This project seeks to provide a close contextual reading of selected films from a pedagogical perspective as an educator with a specific intent. In this sense this research project explores selected feature films as culturally inscriptive offerings, visions, or stories of adults and children engaged (and disengaged) in pedagogical relations.

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[11] The word "cinematography" is derived from cinema which is Greek for *kinema* meaning motion, and from graphy which is also from the Greek derivative *graphon* meaning to write. Cinematography may be understood as a form of inscription--cinematography is a writing of motion. The word "film" is from the Old English word *filmen* meaning membrane or skin. The film screen is the reflective and representative surface in motion which is written upon. Cinematography (film) can be seen and read as a constructively textual representation of tacit commentaries on contemporary life.

This project, then, sees and interprets film as if it were characteristically three-fold. Film is a sight, site, and cite. (1) Film is a "sight" to behold. Film, as a visual product, is a showing and a revealing within a field of vision. We look at a film, and often we see ourselves in the film. This appeal is most personal. It is an appeal that is enhanced by the kinesthetic qualities (the size of the screen, the images, the surrounding darkness, the stereo-phonic sound, the reaction of others, and so on) of the cinematographic experience. We experience in moving ways (albeit vicariously) feelings, events, situations, and relations we may, or may never, encounter in our daily living. There are volumes of research attempting to explore the responses of how one sees film, and how film is a sighted medium. (2) A film offers itself as a "site" to be. Film, again as product, presents itself as a place for numerous space possibilities. In these spaces it is possible to existentially explore a wide range of human experiences. Film reflectively uses a picture of life to frame life as a picture. This process heightens awareness and encourages the audience to think of film as a site where the ordinary may become extra-ordinary and the extra-ordinary becomes ordinary. There are also volumes of research evident that explores film (and filming) as a site to be mapped from a specific perspective--psychoanalytical, sociological, aesthetic, technological, and so on. (3) A film may also offer itself as a "cite" to betold. Film often presents something to be brought forward for consideration. Many films have become part of the contemporary societal fabric and their characterizations, actions, and themes are readily cite-able. Perhaps a film's particularity offers a generalization about life. Or a group of films may focus on a particularity of life. In this sense film is seen as a source for thematic analysis, illustrative criticism, or simply to show an example. There are also volumes of research evident that explores films cited as cultural, social, moral, commercial, or political reference points.

Films offer themselves as texts that may be read for pedagogical possibilities. To read films as texts with pedagogic possibilities is also a challenge to bring deeply felt understandings about life to reflective articulation.

Postmodernist thinking

Change is constant. Many contemporary analysts and commentators, speaking of the present state of affairs in the Western world, are in agreement that something significant with respect to change is occurring in the West's cultural and societal institutions. Unfortunately that is where the agreement ends. There are significant differences with respect to how the current changes in Western society and culture are being conceptualized, described, and interpreted. Smart (1992) suggests there are two emergent sets of conceptual distinctions that dominate how scholars have come to speak about the Western world's present condition.[12] Each respective grouping attempts to name the transformations presently evident by focusing on either Western society or Western culture. (1) There is the "industrial" and "postindustrial" societal distinction, and (2) there is the "modern" and "postmodern" cultural distinction.

(1) The industrial and postindustrial distinction frames those commentaries on the range and depth of changes evident in the West's socioeconomic patterns. Commentaries of this type focus on the tensions between the production and the consumption of knowledge as embodied in the links between science, technology, politics, and capitalism. (2) The modern and the postmodern distinction frames commentaries that focus on the tensions flowing from our expressive representations as they reveal themselves in Western ethical, philosophical, aesthetical, and cultural spheres.

> The question of the possible emergence of postmodern forms of life, of a condition of postmodernity, seems to have displaced the former preoccupation with the prospect of a transition to postindustrial society at the center of the intellectual debate in the West. This possibly reflects the widespread sense that Western civilization, its cultural forms and practices, are undergoing an accelerating process of irreversible transformation. Subject to uncertainty, question, and challenge "the West" no longer represents, or for that matter conceives of itself, as the universal, the model for emulation, or the paradigm for "progress". Indeed the very project upon which the hegemony of the West has been predicated is now in question in the

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[12] Modernity is presently experiencing many political, social, spiritual, and economic tensions (crises). There are ample references in today's social commentaries to the crisis in agriculture, the crisis of the environment, the crisis in world political order, the plight of the unemployable and the urban homeless, the international monetary crisis, the widespread confusion regarding human values, the feminization of poverty, nuclear proliferation, health epidemics, and so on.

> debate over the possible closure or "end of modernity". It is this possibility to which the awkward and ambiguous term "postmodernity" refers. (Smart, 1992, pp. 141, 142)

As the epoch of modernity draws to a close, the appearance of postmodernist thinking umbrellas a broad range of re-conceptualizations of how we, as contemporary people, experience and explain the world around us. In its radical forms postmodernist thinking dismisses the very essence of what constitutes modern constructions of meaning. In its more moderate forms postmodernist thinking opens a space to explore a substantive re-definition and innovation with respect to how we know the meaning of what constitutes the "good" life. In both forms postmodernist thinking sets itself up inside and outside the modern paradigm. From there postmodernist thinking, by utilizing modernity's own criteria for its legitimation processes, shows how modernity actually deconstructs (delegitimates) itself. On many occasions this approach to critiquing the modern world arrives at conclusions already evident in some of the social sciences. Postmodernist thinking makes no claim to be original, but when both the extreme and moderate approaches of postmodernist thinking are considered, this way of thinking constitutes a tremendous intellectual challenge to established knowledge of the twentieth century (Rosenau, 1992). If the modern world, as seen through the lens of instrumental rationality and perpetuated by an empirical-positivistic model of thinking, is facing a significant challenge, then that challenge is named by and is in itself postmodernist thinking.

> The positivist, empiricist, rational-logical model of modern science remained central ... as long as the consensus about the success of this paradigm held firm. But that consensus was vulnerable, and the post-modern opening arrived just as apparent inadequacies made qualifications to modern science seem reasonable. First, impatience with the failure to produce the dramatic results promised by modern science's most enthusiastic supporters increased and fostered cynicism .... Second, attention began to focus on the abuse and misuse of modern science. ... Modern science was accused of covering up government abuses in democratic society and working to sustain totalitarian states. Third, a discrepancy was apparent between the way modern science was supposed to function in theory and how it actually worked .... Fourth, the ill-founded belief that science could solve all problems confronted the obvious incapacity of modern science to remedy the major problems of the twentieth century .... Fifth, modern science took little notice of the mystical and metaphysical dimensions of human existence; rather, it made such matters appear trivial and unworthy of attention. Lastly, it had little to say about the normative and ethical, the purposes to which knowledge scientific or otherwise,

> should and would be put. ... Modern science made everything too concrete; it forgot the poetics. (Rosenau, 1992, pp. 9, 10)

The social commentary from which postmodernist thinking evolves may be traced to the work of the French scholars Lyotard, Barthes, Baudrillard, Derrida, and Foucault even though some of these thinkers have also tried to disassociate themselves from the label postmodernism. Although these thinkers have assumed a leadership role as the foremost developers of postmodernist thinking it is Nietzsche's work and late Heideggerian thought that is often cited as the inspiration for the postmodernist movement. And now within many European intellectual circles today some aspects of postmodernist thinking have become synonymous with interpretive inquiry itself.

> Literary criticism at many universities, for example, implies a post-modern, deconstructive orientation. In addition, much discussion in the social sciences today take space within the post-modern agenda, assuming its terminology and its intellectual orientation without question. Conceptual approaches, including post-positivism, neo-structuralism, post-contemporarism, post-structuralism, and post-Marxism, overlap with post-modernism substantially and monopolize an enormous amount of intellectual energy. Finally, certain themes, central to post-modernism, preoccupy attention in countries where post-modernism is said to be "*depasse*": the death and return of the subject, individualism, the identity of the individual, anti-humanism, cynicism, the philosophy of Heidegger and Nietzsche, nihilism, and the Paris May 1968 tradition. (Rosenau, 1992, pp. 12, 13)

Postmodernist thinking is evident in many European intellectual, artistic and academic circles.[13] What of the North American context? In North America postmodernist thinking is a relatively new phenomenon. Until recently postmodernist thinking was primarily defined as the poststructuralist-deconstruction strategies utilized in university English and fine arts departments. Now attempts to focus and use postmodernist thinking is expanding to many of the social science disciplines. Still these attempts do not include adopting European postmodernism as a set entity to be imported and used without question. Rather it is in the very gapped quality of postmodernism's theoretical manifestations and practical applications that we, as North Americans, have an opportunity to engage in a dialogical struggle with this way of thinking such that it is appropriate to our context.

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[13] Postmodernist thinking, as it has evolved within a Western European intellectual heritage, has traceable links to other philosophical and pragmatic movements. Like most noteworthy movements postmodernist thinking represents a coming together of a number of elements from other, often contradictory, orientations. Postmodernist thinking has borrowed from structuralism, romanticism, phenomenology, nihilism, populism, existentialism, hermeneutics, Marxism, critical theory, semiotics, and anarchism. This contributes to postmodernist thinking coming across like a cut and paste movement. But this is also what makes postmodernist thinking very stimulating. Still, and at the same time, postmodernist thinking is continually on the edge of slipping into total confusion. This is also what makes it dangerous.

In exploring the emergence of postmodernist thinking in the North American context it is important first to attempt to explore what constitutes modern thinking and practice. Certainly, much of the defining process depends upon who is defining, for what purpose, and what understanding of historical periodization is utilized. Within those parameters there are scholars who trace the emergence of modernity directly to the Renaissance, or the Reformation, or the discovery of the New World. Still other scholars cite Augustine's challenge to the metaphysics of classical Antiquity and the impact of the evolution of early Christianity as sources of the modern world. And there are some who trace modernist thinking directly to Greek and Roman traditions of metaphysical thought.[14] It is possible then to trace modernity's origins, as our present named worldly construction, to origins located 2000 years ago or as recently as the Industrial Revolution.

Nevertheless, at some point in time and in space the idea (vision) of a distinctively modern age emerged. The emergent moderns, as those who defined, no longer accepted Antiquity as the unquestioned reference point for knowledge and taste. To be modern meant to embrace a different way of seeing the world. Greek, Roman and Christian heritage came to be seen as merely the dawning of civilization. Pre-modern thoughts and practices were seen, from an emerging modernist perspective, as something grand and yet somewhat infantile, naive, and theoretically deficient. A modern citizen knew he or she was more advanced, more refined, and in possession of more profound truths than the Ancients or those who came after them. In this new, radical, and self-liberating modern way of thinking, grounded upon an ever increasing dominance of rationalist scientific-technological knowledge and practice, the modern citizen assured the human race of advancement and social, political, economic, cultural, and moral betterment.

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[14] In this case the metaphysical traditions refers to philosophical speculations that are both ontological (featuring questions about what is real) and epistemological (featuring questions about how we know what is real).

Modernity's mandate is to attempt to correctively establish a new and improved grounding that not only builds upon the sanctioned traditions of Antiquity, but also seeks to correct the assumed childish misguidedness that brought on the Dark Ages. This modern mandate and the project of modernity itself seems to have come together and take a recognizable form in the eighteenth century within the movement named the Enlightenment.

> The project of modernity ... [may be traced back] to the attempts of eighteenth-century Enlightenment philosophers to cultivate objective scientific inquiry and knowledge, universal morality and law, and autonomous art according to their respective inner logics, the principal objective being to achieve a rational organization of everyday life, to facilitate control of natural and social phenomena and forces, enhance understanding, promote progress, and increase the happiness of humanity. Modernity in this context is synonymous with the goals and values typical of the Western world, with the Western pattern of development as the norm and model to be emulated. (Smart, 1992, pp. 148, 149)

In the scientific inquiry of Bacon there is the idea that "Man" (humankind) can be the sole interpreter of nature. With the mathematical inventiveness of Galileo and the production of the microscope-telescope, as the instrumental way of seeing, there was inaugurated a way to shape and, thus, control the world through exacting, measurable applications of observable positivistic science. Descartes[15] further specified that the self (or subject) is but a thinking substance (I think, and therefore I am) whose existence is confirmed by a clear, rigorous, and logical intellectual activity. To be human is to actively be engaged in an intellectual activity that is in turn framed by features that offer direction, verification, and correction in accordance with systematically defined sets of rules and procedures. Much of what constitutes modernist thinking is, in turn, defined within this process.

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[15] Descartes' (1637) text *Discours de la methode* can be seen now as a turning point in modern intellectual history. In reflecting on the metaphysical questions of reality and how we are to know what is reality Descartes wondered about the conditions under which one is able to speak of existence. He suggested we can think the world away. Indeed, we can think the body away (except for a hormonal connection in the brain). But we cannot think thinking away. It is unthinkable to think thinking away. Therefore, Descartes ended up with the minded proof "I think, and therefore I am." This statement and its implications has ushered in the modern period's pursuit of a minded enlightened world order. The split created between the mind and the body in Descartes' philosophy has become intensely perpetuated through the application of logical, rational, mathematical formulations applied to almost every theory and practice in the modern world.

However, in the process of overcoming the pre-modern by assimilation, subjugation, and annihilation Modernity's new constructed reality is essentially based upon a definition of what it is not. Modernity, as a societal and cultural construction, is rooted in privileging selected poles of a binary, dichotomous, hierarchical system of inclusion and exclusion. In the modern age and in Modernity and in what it means to be modern the definition of who we are, what we do, and why we do what we do, is based upon who we are not, what we do not do, and why we do not do certain things we do not do. Within Modernity's boundaries, Reason as a minded entity is privileged and emotion, which is often linked to animal instinct and the feminine, is devalued; science as the manager of progress battles religion and magic; truth as something logical, positivistic, empirical, and formalistically definable battles story, myth, and narrative; reflection guided by methodological protocols battles intuitive knowing, and on and on. In this sense the modern world is build upon definitions rooted in negation, absence, and opposition.

Never really able to disconnect itself from its tensions with the past Modernity, nevertheless, has pushed forward. However, even though the past is always present, it is currently Modernity's unparalleled technological and scientific success that is generating questions about the nature of Modernity itself.

> Modernity entered history as a progressive force promising to liberate humankind from ignorance and irrationality, but one can readily wonder whether that promise has been sustained. As we on the West approach the end of the twentieth century, the "modern" record--world wars, the rise of Nazism, concentration camps (in both East and West), genocide, world-wide depression, Hiroshima, Vietnam, Cambodia, the Persian Gulf, and the widening gap between rich and poor--makes any belief in the idea of progress or faith in the future seem questionable. (Rosenau, 1992, p. 6)

Kroker (1987) describes the current state of affairs in the modern world in dark and pessimistic terms. His hyperbolic descriptions are of a contemporary world as a place out of control and riddled with tensions; a place where most citizens have come to feel increasingly dysfunctional, and where fragmented subjectivity is the norm. The citizen of the modern world is increasingly being captured as a disembodied mind, violently caught in manipulative pendulum swings from one privileged symbol (consumer product) to another. Images are rampant showing privileged consumptive excesses and conspicuous consumption. Everything in the world is commodified as a product to be consumed or destroyed. Panic science fuels the language of power. Technologically driven media create and perpetuate an insatiable libidinal-based economy. The late-modern world is consumed by idealized standards of sanctioned appearances-images-performances. Everything has become a matter of life and death. Justice has been replaced by the appearance of justice having been done. What used to be sacred ground has now become another crisis-ridden territoriality. What used to seem so real is now hyper-real. Finally, the modern world, built upon a vision of systematic certitude and guidance provided by an internally consistent Cartesian mathematical-based system of idealized relations, is now being eroded, seemingly instantly, by the doubtful, uncertain, and fluctuating realities offered by science's own consumptive desire to explore abstract physics, quantum mechanics, and theoretical mathematics.[16]

Whether a world view is defined from a theoretical perspective or found in the pragmatics of daily living, or in some combination, evidence abounds that the modern world is entering a particularly unusual period of flux and change. Van Manen (1991) provides one interpretation:

> Compared to their parents and grandparents, young people today live in a severely fractured world--families are less stable, divorce has become commonplace, neighbourhoods tend to be more in flux and less community-minded, schools are

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[16] See Doll (1986), pp. 10-16 and Slaughter (1989), pp. 255-270. Both writers indicate that the Western-industrial world view is believed to be based upon a quest for certainty, predictability, and control as achieved through applications of instrumental rationality. The Newton/Cartesian/Descartes synthesis led to the construction of a modern positivistic scientific way of looking at the world which permitted later generations to believe that they were masters over nature and thus separate from and above nature's antinomies. But now, and ironically, it is modern science and its handmaiden technology which have brought increasing awareness to the understanding that human beings cannot exist above the world. We are deeply implicated in the world's continuous state of change and flux. There is a growing sense that the world is inherently antinomically driven and thus uncontrollable in this regard.

> less personal and more competitive, and peer groups set up conflicting loyalties. Moreover, television, radio, newspapers, and other media rush images of adulthood into the living space of young children--images beset with violence, sexuality, drugs, global crises and conflict. Many parents and educators feel uneasy ... that children prematurely see and experience too much in our consumer-oriented, information-based, and advertising-driven culture. ... It is this reality of change, complexity, plurality, fragmentation, conflict, and contradiction of beliefs, values, faiths, living conditions, aspirations, and life-styles, that make the lives of young people today an experience in contingency. (van Manen, 1991, p. 2)

Postmodernist thinking, then, is both what names and what challenges the dominant political, religious, economic, or social paradigms of Modernity.

> Those of the modern conviction seek to isolate elements, specify relationships, and formulate a synthesis; post-modernists do the opposite. They offer indeterminacy rather than determinism, diversity rather than unity, difference rather than synthesis, complexity rather than simplification. They look to the unique rather than to the general, to intertextual relations rather than causality, and to the unrepeatable rather than the re-occurring, the habitual, or the routine. ... Post-modernists search out the intellectual weaknesses, excesses, and abuses of modernity. (Rosenau, 1992, p. 9)

As emergent as postmodern thinking is there are also as many forms of postmodernism as there are postmodernists. Rosenau (1992) indicates that there are two broad groupings of postmodernists becoming evident--the skeptics and the affirmatives.

> The skeptical post-modernists offer a pessimistic, negative, gloomy assessment, argue that the post-modern age is one of fragmentation, disintegration, malaise, meaninglessness, a vagueness or even absence of moral parameters and societal chaos. Inspired by Continental European philosophies, especially Heidegger and Nietzsche, this is the dark side of post-modernism, the post-modernism of despair, the post-modernism that speaks of the immediacy of death, the demise of the subject, the end of the author, the impossibility of truth, and the abrogation of the Order of Representation. ... Ahead lies overpopulation, genocide, atomic destruction, the apocalypse, environmental devastation, the explosion of the sun and the end of the solar system in 4.5 billion years, the death of the universe through entropy. ... If, as the skeptics claim, there is no truth, then all that is left is play, the play of words and meaning. (Rosenau, 1992, p. 15)

The affirmative postmodernists, although in agreement with much of the skeptical position, provide a more hopeful and perhaps optimistic view of the possibilities for living in a postmodern age.

> More indigenous to Anglo-North American culture than to the Continent, the generally optimistic affirmatives are oriented toward process. They are either open to positive political action (struggle and resistance) or content with the recognition of visionary, celebratory personal nondogmatic projects that range from New Age religion to New Wave life-styles and include a whole spectrum of post-modern social movements. Most affirmatives seek a philosophical and ontological

> intellectual practice that is nondogmatic, tentative, and nonideological. These post-modernists do not, however, shy away from affirming an ethic, making normative choices, and striving to build issue-specific political coalitions. Many affirmatives argue that certain value choices are superior to others, a line of reasoning that would incur the disapproval of the skeptical post-modernists. (Rosenau, 1992, p. 16)

In summary, an affirmative postmodernist perspective, although attentive to the darker more skeptical elements of postmodernist thinking, is open to the hope that the North American context itself offers both analytical and pedagogical possibilities. Some of these possibilities may lead to a deeper analysis of the modern-postmodern condition's impact on educational relations. In this regard a direction indicator is offered by a leading voice in the modern-postmodern debate, Jean-Francois Lyotard. Lyotard offers one of the most direct, more intricately argued critiques of Enlightenment thought as a foundational structure of modernity. He suggests, via macro and micro analyses of the structures of language, that the status of knowledge is being altered as Western society moves toward a postindustrial society and a postmodern age. Lyotard also offers both cultural and social options for living in a postmodern age.

> We are not able to predict, control, or design our future, but that should not occasion surprise or stop us continuing to attempt to influence the course of events. As Foucault optimistically reminds us, "things can be changed, fragile as they are, held together more by contingencies than by necessities, more by the arbitrary than by the obvious, more by complex but transitory historical contingency than by inevitable anthropological constraint." We know that social futures are not predetermined, that they cannot be simply engineered or designed. The problems associated with the discredited techno-scientific, instrumental-rational, legislative model of social change make it necessary for us not only to think differently about questions of actualisation, about the complex processes through which social realities are constituted. Understanding the reasons why the complex conditions within which we live are bound to remain, in significant respects, beyond our control, paradoxically provides us with the opportunity of contributing more effectively to the shaping of social futures. (Smart, 1992, pp. 220, 221)

The question of project approach and method

The focus of this study's exploration is the pedagogical relation. There are relatively few theoretical resources available that address the pedagogical relation. There are even fewer sources that document opportunities to see the pedagogical relation at work. In this study North American feature films are explored as societally constructed narrative texts that are pedagogically stimulating in how they depict, or claim to depict, the presence (and absence) of a good educative relation between a teacher and his or her students. Subsequently, this study excludes foreign films. Foreign films like *A Cry in the Dark*, *400 Blows*, *Walkabout*, *Pelle the Conqueror*, *My Life as a Dog*, or *Cinema Paradiseo* could prove to be very informative in pedagogical studies in their own right, or juxtaposed with North American films. However, including foreign movies would make this study too broad.

This study is organized as follows: Chapter One attempts to come to terms with the project's intent, boundaries, and difficulties. Chapter Two features an in-depth exploration of postmodernist thinking based upon the work of Jean-Francois Lyotard.[17] Chapter Three outlines the methodological specifics of the postmodern strategies of deconstruction and the procedural guidelines for exploring three selected feature films. Chapter Four briefly explores aspects of the film industry and the contemporary imaging process as it is applied to depictions of adult-child relations. Chapters Five, Six, and Seven present specific films as pedagogical exemplars. Each film is explored via three readings. First, there is a reading outlining the film's story line combined with editorial interruptions that explore the narrative. Second, there is a presentation of the views of professional critics of the film from which educative themes are explored. Third, there is an attempt to blend the first two readings into a deconstructed reading.[18]

The three cinematographic sources in this study are: (a) *Stand and Deliver* (1988) is a film showing a hard-working, knowledge-loving public school math teacher whose greatest desire is to see his students get ahead. He claims, "Math is a great equalizer." (b) *Dead Poets Society* (1988) is a film showing one English teacher who, against all odds, teaching in an oppressive educational setting, seeks to have his students think for themselves. The subsequent dramatic, indeed tragic, consequences of his demands, "Be true to yourself", "Trust your feelings", "*Carpe diem*" speak volumes for the tensions embedded in educational encounters. (c) *Madame Sousatzka* (1988) is a film showing a matriarchal piano teacher who lives solely for music and barely acknowledges the real world. Yet she claims, "I teach not only how to play the piano but how to live."

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[17] Lyotard is an important source in the modern-postmodern debate because he is an original thinker about questions on what a postmodern philosophy SHOULD DO. Indeed, much of what constitutes postmodernist thinking today flows from Lyotard's work or as a reaction to it.

[18] The term "deconstruction" is primarily linked to the French thinker Jacques Derrida. In North America the deconstruction project has been utilized mainly in the area of literary criticism. However, deconstructive strategies offer possibilities to other disciplines such as philosophy, sociology, history, and education. See Lawson (1985) for a strong reading of the deconstructive project.

The main cinematographic credits for these films are:

(a). *Stand and Deliver* [19] U.S.A. 1989 (103 mins.).

PRODUCTION--p.c.-Warner Bros., dist.-Warner Bros., d.-Ramon Menendez, sc.-Ramon Menendez, Tom Musca, m.-Craig Safan.

FEATURED ACTORS--Edward James Olmos as Jamie Escalante, Rosana De Soto as Fabiola Escalante, Lou Diamond Phillips as Angel, Mark Eliot as Tito, Will Gotay as Pancho, Vanessa Marquez as Ana, Patrick Baca as Javier, Ingrid Olice as Lupe , Karla Montana as Claudia, Lydia Nicole as Rafaela, Daniel Villarreal as Chuco, Carmen Argenziano as Principal Molina, Virginia Paris as Chairwoman Ortega, Andy Garcia as Dr. Ramirez, Rif Hutton as Dr. Pearson .

(b). *Dead Poets Society* U.S.A. 1989 (124 mins.).

PRODUCTION--p.c.-Touchstone Pictures, dist.-Warner Bros., d.-Peter Weir, sc.-Tom Schulman, m-Maurice Jarre.

FEATURED ACTORS--Robin Williams as John Keating, Robert Sean Leonard as Neil Perry, Ethan Hawke as Todd Anderson, Josh Charles as Knox Overstreet, Gale Hansen as Charlie Dalton, Dylan Kunman as Richard Cameron, Allelon Ruggiero as Steven Meeks, James Waterson as Gerard Pitts, Norman Lloyd as Mr. Nolan, Kurtwood Smith as Mr. Perry, Leon Pownall as McAllister, Alexandra Powers as Chris Noel.

(c). *Madam Sousatzka*. U.K. 1988 (122 mins.).

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[19] The abbreviation system to show the credits of individual films is: p.c. = production company, d. = director, sc. = scriptwriter, n. = novelist, m. = musical arranger.

PRODUCTION--p.c.-Sousatzka Productions, dist.-Curzon, d.-John Schlesinger, sc.-Ruth Prawler Jhabvala and John Schlesinger, n.-Bernice Rubens, m.-Gerald Gouriet.

FEATURE ACTORS--Shirley MacLaine as Madame Sousatzka, Dame Peggy Ashcroft as Lady Emily, Twiggy as Jenny, Shabana Azmi as Sushila, Navin Chowdhry as Manek Sen, Leigh Lawson as Ronnie Blum, Geoffrey Bayldon as Mr. Cordle, Sam Howard as Edward, Robert Rietty as Leo Milev, Lee Montague as Vincent Pick.

These films seem to reflect certain Western values and attitudes toward teacher-student relations. A postmodernist exploration of each film may prove to be pedagogically instructive.

Some claims and cautions of using film to explore pedagogic experiences

Some claims and concerns in this exploratory project are

(1) The world of pedagogy is not only a world of written language; it is also a world which embodies all sensory and symbolic dimensions. The visual is one of these dimensions. The work of Derrida, Barthes and Ulmer has already informed us of this visual textuality in significant ways.

(2) To explore and analyze the world of pedagogy as a visual text there still must be methodological strategies evident as there would if discursive material were being researched.

(3) On many occasions it is the artist, as one who observes and documents from the margins, who offers a strong image of the possibilities for growth within a specific culture. This re-focusing ability is not only evident within the realm of literary and educational discourses, but those who primarily explore visual experiences are also able to offer to a culture a means of re-viewing ascribed meanings.

(4) Using film as a source for exploring the pedagogic relationship is unique and, therefore, what may be attempted, accomplished and revealed is not necessarily pre-determinable.

(5) Pedagogic cinematographic research may have an advantage over other forms of pedagogic inquiry in that the medium of expression provides a much more complete vision of the child-adult pedagogical relationship. Film frames each selected encounter wholistically. The centeralized focus of the film may dominate, but also present for study is all that which occurs in the background and in the margins.

(6) Caution must be observed; pedagogic cinematographic research belongs first of all in the aesthetic domain. The inquiry criteria must be pedagogically grounded.

Recapitulation

In this chapter it was argued that the pedagogical relation is a special, a personal, and a two-way intentional educative encounter. The pedagogical relation is an encounter between a reflectively thoughtful teacher, his or her ready and willing students, and the beckoning subject matter at hand. Still this relation is not readily amenable to summation. In order to study the presence (and the absence) of the qualities of the pedagogical relation feature motion pictures are a data source. Film provides a felt (tacit) access to situations, events, and encounters. The challenge, in a pedagogical sense, is to bring felt understandings of the filmic experience into reflective articulation; that is to have films serve as good pedagogical opportunities to engage in conversations regarding the meaning of pedagogy itself. However, because I have also chosen to understand film as a technologically driven and culturally representative product, a postmodern stance offers an analytical space that continually seeks to make problematic the relationship between what we see, hear, and speak and what is left unseen, unheard, and unspoken. I also believe that a postmodernist perspective does not disqualify the governing pedagogical premise of this project. An affirmative postmodernist stance when applied to feature films offers the possibility to see films pedagogically.

> Pedagogically we know that there exists no closed rationality or moral system that will always tells us what is the right thing to say or do with children. However, what we do have are examples of experiences of living with children in a manner

> that was thoughtful and tactful. Whether we succeeded in being thoughtful is a matter of reflecting on the pedagogical significance of children's experiences and of the experiences we have with children. These experiential examples allow us to stand in a self-reflective relation to the normative meanings of pedagogical thoughtfulness and tact to which we can orient ourselves. (van Manen, 1991, pp. 216-218)

CHAPTER TWO

THE MODERN-POSTMODERN CONDITION

What will no longer do is either to eulogize or to ridicule the postmodern *en bloc*. The postmodern must be salvaged from its champions and from its detractors. (Andreas Huyssens.)

Introduction

This project hinges on the understanding that the exploration of the nature of the pedagogical relation begins with an awareness of the elusive, perhaps ineffable, nature of pedagogy itself. Also this project assumes that contemporary feature films offer research possibilities. However, both the contemporary institution of education and the modern motion picture industry are driven by the same complexity of hegemonic forces that dominate the Western-industrial world consciousness. These dominant forces operate from a self-assured grounding rooted in instrumental rationality and empirical positivism. Interpretive power in Western society is defined and perpetuated accordingly. Thus the prevailing dominant ideologies of the modern world often seek to limit the means by which individuals or groups may explore alternative ways of knowing. Confronting modernity's dominant way of knowing, a postmodern orientation attempts to provide alternative space possibilities for individuals and social groups, privately and publicly, to deal with the ever-increasing subliminally felt experience that there may exist something beyond modernity's restrictive grasp. Postmodern thinking is a way to learn to understand these experiences on a more conscious, critical level (Sarup, 1988).

What, then, is postmodernism? First and foremost the term "postmodernism" itself is in flux. Nevertheless, three definitions have emerged with some degree of consensus. (1) Postmodernism names a movement within the discipline of architecture that is critical of modern architectural intent and design. In this context postmodernist thinking renounces modernism's desire for universalism, its belief in absolute progress, and its elitist utopian idealism as the only values by which to form the "rules" for the construction of human living spaces.[20] (2) Postmodernism, in an umbrella-like manner, also names a variety of artistic forms of expressive experimentation which have evolved over the last twenty years. There is increasing evidence of postmodernist expression in literature, music, dance, and the visual arts as well as the dramatic arts. Postmodernism names these attempts to explore different ways of engaging in aesthetic practices. However, there is still confusion over exactly what is being named and what the different artistic practices are really trying to accomplish aesthetically.[21] (3) As a mode of reflective and critical thinking about the contemporary world and as a philosophical-theoretical stance, postmodernism is most often associated with the agenda-setting work of Jean-Francois Lyotard.[22] Lyotard's (1989) *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* is a useful starting point for an exploration of a postmodernist perspective as a way of thinking about the condition of modern life. Lyotard's thesis denies the possibility of any systematizing, totalizing meta-theory which can encompassingly name and thus imply control over the irreducible particularities of the somatic, experiential lifeworld.

What follows first is a review of the modern condition. Second, there is an in-depth exploration of Lyotard's work as a primary source of thinking regarding postmodernism. Third, there is an attempt to suggest how selected intents and aspects of postmodernist thinking may facilitate an exploration of the meaning of pedagogy.

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[20] See Norris and Benjamin (1988), pp. 36-43. These scholars offer a strong exploration of the similarities and differences between modern and postmodern architecture (complete with illustrations).

[21] See Silverman (1990). Silverman's text contains a collection of articles about postmodernist influence in areas of the arts, theater, photography, television, dance, and fashion.

[22] Lyotard's (1989) *The postmodern condition* is a report on the condition of knowledge in the most highly developed societies of the world. It is an original work prepared for the Conseil des Universities of Quebec and completed in 1979.

The modern condition

Collins (1990) offers an image of modernity as the latest wing of "the Grand Hotel" of culture:

> The Grand Hotel ... [is] a magnificent structure with many corridors and wings and turrets--diverse, but all reflective of a grand design and central authority. The Grand Hotel was an ancient institution with a foundation laid by the Greeks. Although it was always adding on and could never be considered to be completed, each addition to the Grand Hotel of culture was "authorized" and fit in with the master plan. ... In the Grand Hotel everything is controlled by an unseen hand. Different aspects of culture are subsets of a master system or instruments in a larger orchestra that's being led by whomever--the dominant class, the academy, or the "culture industry." Texts are ordered and directed to deal with certain kinds of subject matter and not others. Audiences "know their place" and know what they are supposed to be consuming. (pp. 68-70)

Specifically modernity is the named contemporary societal construction of the Western world. This construction has grown as a project featuring and extending selective elements of the Renaissance-Enlightenment wings of the Grand Hotel. Moderns have built upon the traditions honored by these influential wings. The result is that to be "modern", in every sense of the word, has come to represent a way of living that values scientific rationality, technological universality, and empirical legitimation.

There are two guiding grand narratives distinguishable from the Renaissance-Enlightenment movement presently influencing modernity. (1) There is the meta-narrative of emancipation and individual liberation. This tradition tells the story of the Peoples' liberation from Antiquity and especially the Dark Ages. It is a liberation through the enlightened accumulation and circulation of "modern" scientific knowledge. Science, technology, and capitalism as modern instruments (means) have liberated "Man" (Humankind) into the present condition of being more fully human. If humankind is to achieve the ideal state of perfection, then techno-scientific progress must be embraced. (2) There is the meta-narrative of totalization. This tradition tells the story of humankind's ultimate desire for unification (a bringing together in an organic wholeness) of all knowledge under one guiding conceptual-theoretical framework. For example, the modern world has honored the biological story of Darwin's scientific theory of genetic laws legitimating removing "man" from the heavens and placing her and him competitively, although superiorly endowed, among the other creatures of the earth. Then Marx, in exploring theoretically the economic universal applicability of master laws of supply and demand, sought to reunite the proletariat and his or her alienated labor in a climactic stage of utopian synthesis. And Freud's psychoanalytic story tells of a minded desire to unite the Id and Ego split through a series of progressively adjusting stages as overseen by the managerial Super-ego. Perhaps the most radical and deadly appropriations of these Enlightenment meta-narratives were manifest in the warring practices of Hitler, Mussolini, and Hirohito who dreamt of one story featuring a divine right of unification albeit through extermination.

Yet in spite of, and perhaps despite, each theoretical and pragmatic attempt at a totalizing control and unifying mastery of the modern world, in order to fulfill humankind's self-appointed self-defined mission, the present turning toward the twenty-first century reveals a world condition fraught with deep and radical turmoil. Privileged moderns are rapidly becoming more aware of the multiplicity and heterogeneity of the smaller, different, perhaps alternative, stories of individuals (and groups) which have, to a degree, always existed although this existence has been systematically devalued by the exclusivity of the dominant grand narratives. Ironically, could it have been in the demands and applications of positivistic science, innovative technology, commercial capitalism, and the dogmatic quest for exclusive knowledge production-consumption dominance, within the goal boundaries of the modern story, that an awareness of difference and of otherness has been opened up? This increasing awareness of others and their different stories has also brought into the open questions about other ways of knowing and constructing stories. Moderns are turning to face what has otherwise been put aside, assimilated, or annihilated not only in the last 90 years of instrumentally-driven technological domination, but also in the last 200 years of modern scientific progress, and even in the Grand Hotel's entire 2000 years of construction.

The postmodern condition

Lyotard's thesis comes to rest on the premise that postmodernist thinking points to an incredulity (skepticism-disbelief) of meta-narratives. This incredulity is, in fact, inherent in modernity's legitimation process. This is the very process by which modernity attempts to verify, authorize, and support its exclusive foundational meta-narratives. Essentially, Lyotard's support for this stance evolves like this. Every society utilizes a privileged process of legitimation. The selected process is used in order to sanction the dominant power group's authorative governing structures. However it is important to note that for Lyotard's exploration of modernity's legitimation process, he characterizes the process as quintessentially discourse sensitive. Lyotard's analysis of the legitimation processes of modernity's grand stories utilizes a specific understanding of the structure of language.

Certainly language is not the only means by which to explore social power relations. Still we are all born into a language tradition. We are deeply positioned by language, be it spoken or be it unspoken. As such, Lyotard argues that language structurally and functionally possesses game-like qualities. The sender (as the one who utters a statement), the addressee (as the one who receives it), and the referent (which is the content) interact as if guided by a contractual set of game rules as in a move-oriented adversarial contest. Different contents and different intents of communicative attempts manifest themselves in the interplay of different language game utterances. Utterances, which are similar to and different from other utterances, may be grouped into denotative, performative, interrogative, evaluative, and prescriptive categories.

Societal institutions are guided by specific purposes. Accordingly they have come to order and privilege specific language game utterances. Some utterances are declared admissible within the institutional boundaries and others are not.

> The [institutional] constraints function to filter discursive potentials, interrupting possible connections in the communication networks: there are things that should not be said. They also privilege certain classes of statements whose predominance characterizes the discourse of the particular institution: there are things that should be said, and there are ways of saying them. Thus: orders in the army, prayer in

> church, denotation in the schools, narration in families, questions in philosophy, performativity in business. (Lyotard, 1984, p. 17)

Accepting this understanding of language and continuing to press the question of legitimation, power, and the institutionalization of said legitimation and power, Lyotard asks: does scientific knowledge, as the dominant definitive knowledge of the modern world, flow from a specific language game? If so, what is the relationship between sender, addressee, and referent in terms of how knowledge is identified, acquired, and transmitted?

In response, Lyotard notes that for an utterance to be admissible as "scientific", by modern standards, it must conform to three requirements. (1) The sender should address the referent (object, concept, etc.) in question in such a way as to provide proof via supportive statements or as to refute via contradictory statements. (2) The addressee should acknowledge the referent statement, in turn, under the same double validity requirements--proof or refutation. (3) With continuing and escalating exchanges the addressee may potentially become an equal to the original sender. The resultant sender-addressee-referent partnership then establishes an even stronger bond of double legitimacy. There is a community of agreement. In the nineteenth century the denotative proof-refutation rule of modern science was verification, and in the twentieth century it is falsification.

If the dominant modern knowledge producing institution of technological science is the high water mark for communication patterns, then a citizen's competence is linked to, and ultimately depends on, the judged validity of statements proposed, evidence offered, and judgements conferred by peers who speak the same language. So "the truth of the statement and the competence of its sender are thus subject to the collective approval of a group of persons who are competent on an equal basis. Equals are needed and must be created" (Lyotard, 1984, p. 24). It is in the desire to create language game equals, and as a means to ensure the perpetuation of the sanctioned legitimation process, that modernity has developed a complimentary vision of a didactic, instrumental, performance-driven educational system.

Modern education, as a societal institution, has been called into existence in order to facilitate a specific way of transmitting society's knowledge. Reflecting and representing contemporary society's grand narratives, which value and privilege denotative and prescriptive language games, institutional education attempts to establish a means to create appropriate language game equals. It is important that modern citizens understand and participate in the sanctioned language game. This ensures modernity's ability to legitimate its quests for universal totalization and humankind emancipation.

In order to perpetuate the sanctioned game language honored by modernity the modern institution of education establishes and operates within specific limits. (1) The student as the addressee is envisioned as existing in a state of relative ignorance. The student is seen as an embodiment of a poverty. That is the student could be seen as a blank slate to be written on. Or as an empty vessel to be filled. Or as a plastic malleable substance to be moulded. Or even as an animal-like hedonistic creature to be moved through definitive stages and phases of control. Whatever the student's designated neophyte condition is called, the student-addressee does not know, quantitatively or qualitatively, what the sender as the sanctioned language game expert knows. The expert holds the knowledge and power. The educative relation, for the most part, is a one-way relationship. (2) The student has much to learn to overcome his or her inherent condition of poverty, or incompleteness, in order to obtain status, privilege, and empowerment. (3) But the promise of a "good" educational institution is that it is possible, especially if the system of transmission of knowledge is exacting, specific, and correctable, for a student to learn and performatively demonstrate what the sender (master) teaches. When the learning process is enhanced through repeated testable approximations toward the templated ideal the promise is obtainable. (4) In fact, the student, as original addressee, may become a legitimate, sanctioned expert. An expert with competence measured equal to the teaching master's (the original sender). (5) It seems reasonable, then, that to enhance the subject matter content for its successful transmission, and to ensure effective and efficient learning, all knowledge-skills-behaviors-competencies should be segmented into sequential building block hierarchies. This piecemealing of knowledge facilitates its management, accountability, and testability. Over time, performances can be empirically measured and verified against accumulative standards.

Having built the case that modern scientific knowledge is instrumentally rational, rooted in denotative and prescriptive language games, and dominates every contemporary societal institution--including the education system--Lyotard begins to show that it is the grand narratives' self-legitimatizing process itself which has undercut its own foundations. This undercutting has contributed greatly to society's current condition of tension and flux.

Lyotard claims that scientific and technological knowledge contemptuously seeks to exclude, in the name of effective and efficient performativity, all that which it considers pre-scientific; that knowledge which is designated pre-scientific is certainly pre-modern knowledge. This "other" knowledge, as exclusively defined by modern positivistic science, is deemed too random, too non-referential, or too rooted in narrative and descriptive language games to be admitted a legitimate knowledge under the denotative-prescriptive language game rules as fostered and perpetuated by modernity. The result is that modern scientific technologically based institutions take a stance to

> classify them (narrative statements) as belonging to a different mentality: savage, primitive, underdeveloped, backward, alienated, composed of opinions, customs, authority, prejudice, ignorance, ideology. Narratives are fables, myths, legends, fit only for women and children. At best, attempts are made to throw some rays of light into this obscurantism, to civilize, educate, develop. (Lyotard, 1984, p. 27)

Lyotard's close analysis of how modernity legitimates (and empowers) itself illustrates that in modernity's desire to define "The" way of knowing it infers there exists at least two ways of knowing. This is true even if one way of knowing has been systematically devalued by the other way of knowing. One way of knowing (and speaking and being) offers a totalizing controlling series of inter-related meta-narratives valuing performativity and efficiency as empirically verifiable through the ratio of output to input.

This form of speaking (being) together specifically seeks to exclude, in order to ensure its own survival, other ways of speaking (being) together. The other condition of knowing eschews the meta-narratives. This way of knowing reasserts the value of the "little narratives." These little narratives derive their value from being discontinuous, catastrophic, paradoxical, and locally determined (During, 1990). They derive their power and value by being attentive to life's alteric and antinomic qualities.

To further show the two ways of knowing Lyotard outlines the tension between them. (1) Modernity is based on an exclusive understanding of how and why the modern world evolved. This understanding is supported from and perpetuated by a scientifically sanctioned denotative language game. (2) This game, as fortified by the privileging protocols of instrumental rationality, has become institutionally solidified. For any project to be deemed legitimate, or worthwhile, it must fall within the rational, empirical standards against which all "real" knowledge is measured. (3) As the dominant meta-narratives seek to legitimate, and reinforce, their power-base they will reach a point when they simply are not able to do so. Despite the meta-narratives being based upon a seemingly exclusive language game, the process of legitimation itself is still language-based. Thus, despite the modern world's predominant use of denotative language game, human beings themselves are still inherently sensitive to a narrative-based language game. No prescriptive formula, no structures, and no mechanical selectivity and exclusivity can reduce, or eradicate, the "other" qualities (the narrative qualities) inherent in language itself. If language is essentially narrative and not, for example, expository or argumentative, then at some point even within the privileged language game of denotation language's inherently responsive, playful narrative qualities will create gaps, spaces, and differences between what we see, feel, think, know, and how we express what we see, feel, think, and know. Denotative-prescriptive language games may attempt to reduce or even eradicate the narrative qualities of language in the name of efficiency or effectiveness, but simply the alteric, antinomic, and narrative qualities of language, and of life itself, cannot be denied. (4) Since modernity's grand narratives are language sensitive, every attempt to formulate and exclude the difference embodied in narrativity from the grand narratives is rhetorically doomed. Meta-narratives cannot legitimate themselves as denotatively based meta-stories while devaluing the features of narrativity. (5) The tensions of the modern-postmodern condition arises from modernity's progressive attempts to reinforce its meta-narratives seemingly exclusive dominance. By attempting to bring total closure over other ways of knowing and speaking together, the legitimation process brings an awareness of those other ways. As modern citizens become increasingly aware of the small narratives which have been put aside, buried, or devalued in modernity's quest for a universal, idealized process of self-legitimation, the questioning emerges. (6) A postmodernist orientation flows from a questioning of why the difference that makes a difference seems to have been targeted by most applications of modernist thinking as that which needs to be eliminated if the modern story is to progress. As well there is a turning of attentiveness to the personal, little, truly narrative-based stories lived in the experiential, existential pragmatics of the everyday lifeworld. Taken as valid and real stories, the little personal narratives, in turn, reinforce the very condition of the possibility of the global delegitimation of institutional modernity both in theory and in practice. During indicates that "the recognition of the failure of science's claim to self-legitimation spells the end for the grand narratives of human emancipation and philosophical speculation" (1990, pp. 122, 123).

As post-Freudians living in the contemporary world, it is possible to understand the emergence of the modern-postmodern condition. We know that in making choices (consciously or not) that which has been excluded often re-surfaces. It is possible to understand that in the conditions where pre-modern people chose to embrace a privileged way of seeing, and speaking about, the world which favored selected poles of binary oppositions, there also existed the possibility to have chosen something other than what we, as modern citizens, have perpetuated into modernity's dominant features. It is, in part, modernity's problematical encounter with excluded "otherness" that is significantly contributing to what Lyotard has called the present postmodern condition of incredulity towards meta-narratives.

Modernity has certainly defeated many challenges in its progressive march forward; a march seeking to liberate humankind from darkness, irrationality, and primitivism. It would be consistent for moderns to envision the latest societal upheaval as just one more problem, or crisis, to be resolved. But again the irony of the modern-postmodern condition is that the present state of affairs is not a "crisis" in the modern sense of the word. It is not something which can be readily solved, or resolved, or removed by applying a properly rationalized fix or cure. Burch (1986) indicates that the "thinking" required to face the tension emerging in a modern-postmodern world is not that of the conditioned modernist thinker. A thinker who seeks to provide theoretical formulations and technical fixes. As an alternative to such a way of thinking, Burch suggests that there is a need to explore what it means to live together as human beings in an inter-penetrating space. This is a pedagogical space in which human beings must learn to dwell together by generating meaning (theory) while still being attentive to the ontic (existing) here and now (practice). To live in the modern-postmodern world requires reflective thought. But we cannot live out of, or beyond, our bodies and its connectedness to the earth. Perhaps the modern-postmodern question becomes one of what form will the connectedness take.

> Thinking does not seek to abandon or repudiate common sense, but to situate it in a more comprehensive context of intelligibility, which yet in itself presages a transformation of common sense. Thinking does not seek to preclude or belittle instrumental action. It acknowledges that our being in the world requires that we find out how to deal with things, if no longer just exploitively, nonetheless with competence. And it acknowledges that there are instrumental activities which are "thoughtful," that is, which besides merely producing or accomplishing, are in themselves a deliberate gathering and disclosing of sense. Thinking does not seek to replace or reform positive science, nor to dismiss it as merely a theoretical construction remote from lived experience. Yet, amid the successes of science, thinking must ask about the proper scope of scientific knowing and the ground and limit of its effectiveness, and, hence, among other things, recall science to itself. (Burch, 1986, p. 17)

Lyotard also names a space where individuals and communities may come together.

> It [postmodernism] is changing the meaning of the word *knowledge*, while expressing how such change can take place. It is producing not the known, but the unknown. And it suggests a model of legitimation that has nothing to do with maximized performance, but has as its basis difference understood as paralogy. (Lyotard, 1984, p. 60)

A paralogic legitimation[23] as a way of knowing self, other, and earth is attentive to life's narrative, contingent, and antinomic qualities. A paralogical stance accepts that what we know is based upon a linguistic system which is arbitrarily grounded. A language system that is inherently heteromorphous (variant in form) and subject to heterogeneous (consisting of dissimilar elements) sets of pragmatic rules. Paralogically-defined language games mimic life's contradictory qualities as opposed to seeking to capture them. Consensus in this legitimation process is derived from speaking together. But consensus is only a particular state of a discussion. It is not the one and only end-product. A paralogic orientation toward the world is an orientation toward (a) a recognition of the heteromorphous nature of language games, (b) and any consensus on the rules defining a game and the moves playable within it must be local and agreed on by its present players and subject to eventual cancellation, (c) therefore, the pragmatics of a lifeworld discourse is an inclination to a multiplicity of finite discourses limited in space and time.

In summary, the following appears evident in Lyotard's outline of the modern-postmodern condition: (1) The term "postmodern" "designates the state of our culture following the transformations which, since the end of the nineteenth century, have altered the game rules for science, literature, and the arts" (Lyotard, 1989, p. xxiii). (2) An understanding of these transformations may be possible by exploring the way in which parameters of knowledge are legitimated. (3) Central to the exploration of the modernist attempt at legitimation of positivistic-based knowledge is the concept of language games. (4) With the respect to the concept of language games, it is assumed the modern world has been constructed via denotative and prescriptive language games. And in modernity's quest for legitimation of its privileging scientific knowledge language game, there is a claim as a reference source the meta-narratives (grand stories) traceable to the Enlightenment traditions. However, such an appeal process is inherently flawed. (5) First, there is presently a deep and direct questioning of the emancipatory promises of science and technology. The significant cost to personal, societal, and environmental life over the last fifty years is becoming very much evident. The resulting questioning confronts the rationales of the knowledge which has guided modern progress. Second, the capitalist mode of production and consumption has turned knowledge into a commodity. Knowledge is now no longer desired for its intrinsic value; rather it has become a mercantilistic commodity to be bought and sold for its exchange-value. Third, even though the meta-narratives of the Enlightenment tradition are a source of legitimation for the modern condition of knowledge they also inherently embody the seeds of delegitimation for the modern condition of knowledge. (6) The internal and external tension in modernity's quest for legitimation is presently increasing. The more the modern world seeks to legitimate the conditions of its foundational knowledge the more it finds itself increasing the crisis of delegitimation. (7) Delegitimation emerges because it is ironically fueled by modernity's own selective legitimation process. The present crisis in scientific knowledge, signs of which have been accumulating since the end of the nineteenth century, is not born of a chance proliferation of science, itself an effect of progress in technology and the expansion of capitalism. Rather there is "an erosion at work inside the speculative game, and by loosening the weave of the encyclopedic net in which each science was to find its place, it eventually sets them free" (Lyotard, 1989, p. 39). (8) In this present struggle between legitimation and delegitimation there is a growing sense that the meta-narratives of the Enlightenment (meta-narratives of speculative self-legitimation and of individual emancipation), once treated as if the only groundings possible, are now increasingly revealing themselves for what they are. The governing meta-narratives of the modern world are arbitrary groundings. The meta-narratives, by which we currently live, are not givens set in stone. They are social and cultural constructions. Constructions that have been created through a long and complex system of exclusion and inclusion. This awareness of the incredulity of the meta-narratives shakes the solidity of the modern foundations. The postmodern condition of knowledge emerges. (9) The postmodern condition of knowledge is that shadow, that opposition, or that alternative which responds to modernity's legitimation process in three ways. First, postmodernist thinking speaks out against totalization. There is an antagonism to modernist aspirations to fortify a transcendental subject, to define an essential human nature, to prescribe a global human destiny, and to proscribe collective human goals. Second, postmodernist thinking speaks out against teleology (from the Greek *teleos* end + *logos* discourse). Following the post-structuralist insistence on the arbitrary nature of the sign, the core element of language, postmodernist thinking confronts any idea of a decidable origin, or cause, or doctrine of productive causality which exclusively sets the parameters for any journey ahead of time. Third, postmodernist thinking speaks out against utopian designs. There is skepticism directed toward any collective programmes or proposed solutions which "tend to rely heavily for their implementation on the maintenance of strict party discipline, a conviction of ideological certitude, etc. ... In other words all Holy Wars require casualties and infidels, all utopias come wrapped in barbed wire" (Hebdige, 1989, p. 196).

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[23] "Paralogy" is a word from the Greek *para* meaning beside and *logos* meaning word. Literally there is always something beside(s) the words we speak.

Criticisms of Lyotard's postmodernist stance

Lyotard's text gives voice to his reflections on the state of modern science, the changing nature of knowledge in industrialized nations, the differences between narrative knowledge and scientific knowledge, the possible ways in which scientific knowledge is legitimated and eventually delegitimated, and the social changes that may take place within the tensions of the modern-postmodern condition. With respect to what Lyotard sees as emergent in the present modern-postmodern tension he highlights several different cognitive and social options. These are options which have been, to date, obscured by the restrictive workings of modernity's grand narratives. Lyotard suggests that the new cognitive options could be "paralogy" (Lyotard, 1989, p. 60), "agonistics" (p. 16) and "the recognition of the heteromorphous nature of language games" (p. 66). The new social options could be realized in an openness to the possibilities of temporary contact supplanting permanent institutions in personal, professional, cultural, economic, political, national, and international domains. These options (both cognitive and social) are seen as authentic alternatives for living in a postindustrial society and a postmodern culture.

Having said that, Lyotard also embraces the awareness that every reflection, understood as a constructed interpretation, is open to critique. In this regard some scholars begin a critique of Lyotard's work by questioning Lyotard's positioning from which he constructs his interpretation. These scholars point to Lyotard's maleness and his being a white, European academic, as well as a disillusioned Marxist and Freudian. They conclude that Lyotard's perspective, despite the postmodernist rhetoric, is still significantly modern. This line of reasoning is cited as proof that Lyotard, despite his claims, cannot escape the modernist desire to convince that the end of one way of knowing, rooted in metaphysics of presence and representation, allows for one and only one alternative option. With the recognition of the irreconcilability and incommensurability of modernity's grand narratives, Lyotard seems to advocate that only local and context-specific criteria of validity should be used to frame communications. It is at this point that scholars such as Benhabib (1984), Weber (1990), During (1990), and Huyssens (1990) join in the critique of Lyotard. In advocating a polytheism of values, an agonistics of language, and a dialogical means of securing temporary consensus, Lyotard is critiqued on two accounts. First, Lyotard cannot escape the need for a criteria of validity. That need for some grounding criteria seems to slip into an attempt to locate some transcendent grounding. Thus Lyotard seems to privilege one knowledge-practice relation (narrativity) over others. Second, the pluralism Lyotard suggests in social relations seems rather socio-economically and politically naive. Is it really possible to set up an idyllic vision of language games based on the model of a chess match where every player has access to the perfect information she or he requires to make the next move? If language games are agonistic, then is there not always a struggle to delegitimize, to overpower, and to silence the language game of the other player? In these regards the critics claim that Lyotard has misjudged human nature as well as the nature of modernity.

The implications of these critiques seems to come down to the suggestion that in every form of language game, even in the narrative-based language game, there must be competition, and that in every structural relationship some sense of a grounding is required or human existence will slip into incoherence. These are legitimate modernist critiques of Lyotard's postmodernist stance. However, what the critiques are really pointing to is not the weakness of Lyotard's thesis but its strength. The point Lyotard seeks to make is that a participant who is exploring his or her world cannot step outside of that which is being contested. The hermeneutic tradition reminds us that we always take up our questions from within a conversation already and everywhere at work. We are always implicated in the values chosen as well as those chosen to be challenged. What Lyotard is responding to, at the deepest level, is that inherent in modernity itself is a different way to see the world. What Lyotard advocates is a way of continuously redeeming, regaining, and recapturing the hermeneutic question.

> Its [postmodernism] aims are ... to make us look to the past from the *acknowledged* distance of the present, a distance which inevitably conditions our ability to know the past. The ironies produced by such distancing are what prevents the postmodern from being nostalgic; there is no desire to return to the past as a time of simpler or more worthy values. These ironies also prevent any antiquarianism; there is no value to the past in and of itself. This is the conjunction of the present and the past that is intended to make us question--that is, analyze and try to understand--both how we make and make sense of our culture.
> Instead of looking to totalize, then, ... what we need to do is to interrogate the limits and powers of postmodern discourse ... [and] to the consistently problematized issues ... like historical knowledge, subjectivity, narrativity, reference, textuality, discursive context. ... [Postmodernist thinking] tries to problematize and, thereby, to make us question. But it does not offer answers. It cannot, without betraying its own anti-totalizing ideology. Yet, both the detractors and promoters of the postmodern *have* found answers, and this is because the paradoxes of the postmodern do allow for answers--but only if you ignore the other half of the paradox. ... everywhere--in today's fiction, in painting, in film, in photography, in dance, in architecture, in poetry, in drama ... in art's contradictions, as in those of contemporary theory, we may find no answers, but

> the questions that will make any answering process even possible are at least starting to be asked. (Hutcheon, 1988, pp. 8, 9)

Lyotard's analysis of the modern-postmodern condition of knowledge expands the horizons of the modern quest by critically re-reading modernity's privileging grand narratives for what they exclude. Certainly Lyotard's work is riddled with modernist notions. Modernity, as that societal condition which frames our present lives, is also that very condition which frames postmodernist thinking. Modernity and postmodernity, like pre-modernity and modernity, are deeply implicated. As Lyotard suggests, the other stories (postmodern stories) which are now emerging are bringing us as modernity's citizens, benefactors, and constructors face to face with what really has been excluded (and why) by the modern destructive process of construction. Lyotard's work also offers something which points to what may be reconstructed after the deconstruction of modernity's foundational meta-narratives. As individuals living in social communities, the direction, scope, and pace of our journey together, at a minimum, must be discovered by dialogically speaking together. This is in contrast to the present modern system of independent, combative monologues. Such is the hope embodied in Lyotard's speculative work. And like every real hope there are no guarantees.

A personal and a professional postmodernist orientation

I grew up on a small farm in northern Alberta as a white, heterosexual male of Scottish immigrant parents. Now in my late 30s I am still a white, heterosexual male and a university trained teacher. How could I not be part of the modern world? I have benefitted greatly by being born at this time and in this place. However, stimulated by questions about the present condition of turmoil in education (witnessed first hand) and intrigued by recent academic studies, I have moved toward an exploration of postmodernist thinking. It is a way of thinking which certainly challenges much of that which I had come to know and understand about myself, others, and the world.

My initial explorations into postmodernist thinking brought on a certain existential trembling. I was intellectually frightened when faced with some aspects of postmodernist thinking. Some of these aspects seemed to characterize a postmodern life as nothing but a fruitless attempt to face the anguished sense of being lost, or as an existence dominated by feelings of being hopelessly de-centered, or even as a way of being featuring the prospect of a cheerless destiny. However, passing beyond those fears about how modern life was depicted as well as the fear that groundless playfulness was all there was to postmodernist thinking, I began to realize that by being responsively responsible to the embedded call, and the pedagogical possibilities, to learn something from the difficult questions postmodernist thinking asks, I might just benefit from the opportunity to re-orient my teaching knowledge and practice enabling me to do the right thing more often with my students. Postmodernist thinking, at its deepest, opens spaces within which to explore and, perhaps even enhance, the process of what it means to embrace teaching-learning situations rooted in diverse histories, different languaged voices, unique personal memories, storied ancestral traces, and alternative cultural myths. Postmodernist thinking offers the possibility to continually wonder about the recombining of these aspects of living through our dialogical encounters together as teachers and as students. Postmodernist thinking is something which affords me the opportunity to question, to doubt, and to wonder about pedagogy. And it also offers the opportunity to do something about this questioning.

Postmodernist thinking, especially in an affirmative and constructive form, offers something ironically quite stable. Through an awareness that we must continually be open to face, to encounter, and to understand the constant alteric and antinomic qualities of the lifeworld, postmodernist thinking provides a way to stand in the world. This form of postmodernist thinking does not give up on life. Nor does it make it easy to abdicate one's responsibility to self and others by wholeheartedly embracing the superficial banner of "anything goes". What postmodernist thinking, of the kind I believe exists, does is lead us to wonder: if memory, fear, and hope gave birth to a metaphysics of idealized Reason, then is it not possible that also inherent in memory, fear, and hope are the possibilities of another way of being?

So if postmodernist thinking can be a frightening challenge to those who like their theories clear and logical, practices efficient and effective, and conversations business-like and adversarial, then what possibilities might postmodern thinking offer to the business of the systematic education of the young?

What are the challenges postmodernist thinking brings to me as a teacher in the modern institution of schooling? First, postmodernist thinking requires a response to the deeply reflective and reflexive questions: who am I? and how (why) have I come to this present position? In responding to these questions a caution must be observed. There are aspects of postmodernist thinking which certainly reinforce, in a modern sense, a concentration on one's own subjectivity. A person may become so intrigued by some elements of postmodernist thinking's focus on subjectivity that it plays into the hands of an already predisposed narcissistic and hedonist modern consumer culture. When this happens others (and otherness) become even more excluded and meaningless. It takes some commitment to the deeper elements of postmodernist thinking to open spaces to engage in a dialogue about what it means to be self-conscious, and what it means to be other-conscious, and what it means to address questions about who one is and how one came to be who one is. Still to continually question, in postmodernist sense, one's positioning in life may lead one to be more aware of what it means to be situated as self and as other in the contemporary world. In turn, this sensitivity to a subjectively differentiated world may lead to a workable understanding of the subjective difference of others. Difference becomes the condition from which flows both the possibilities and the limits for me to be who I can be with others. This is not just a reference to being different for the sake of being different. It is an awareness of the authentic challenge to know self and other as one and the same and yet different (knowing and doing as twin moments).

This discovery process also embodies a challenge to live within this differential tension in a constructive, ethical, responsible, and exemplary way. Self is not defined in formulations of self-referencing to an idealized my-ness; rather self is significantly defined by the horizons encountered as an other. As a child moving toward adulthood I was able to increasingly define myself through encounters with caring and thoughtful adults. These adults were in every sense of the word adults. Yet in many ways they seemed to know my subjective child-world. They knew it was a world oriented by a different subjectivity than theirs. Aspects of this awareness seemed to make it possible for me to move towards greater maturity. As a teacher there is something to be learned here about subjectivity, otherness, responsibility, and intentionality; a something which should ensure greater effectiveness and affectiveness during my personal and professional encounters with students.

Second, a postmodernist perspective encourages a person to understand life from a de-centered perspective. Postmodernist thinking encourages me to know that in a larger hermeneutic sense the present moment is but one of many in a progression. It is in this sense that I am both a centered subject and a de-centered subject. But this does not mean that subjectivity and authenticity have been entirely dismissed by postmodernist thinking. What is being challenged is a modernist (Cartesian) notion of subjectivity. A notion of subjectivity definitively bounded by the protocols of philosophical relativism, or as that most valued pole in a dichotomy defined through its opposition to objectivity. Postmodernist thinking breaks these definitive rules and the "either-or" dualism. Certainly as a teacher my growing students should require me to be grounded. They require that bounded stable quality in me so they can feel secure, safe, and at home. It is this sense of being at home which then encourages their venturing outward through risk-taking. Often children still need to know full well that I will be there (just in case). But I cannot be exactly the same, every time, to every child. To do so would require becoming everything that life is not--unmoveable, rigid, and finite. Is that the model to present to children who are themselves venturing in a world riddled with flux and change? If teaching is a normative practice is it not important that we show, through being good examples, our students how we, as teachers and adults, are capable of being oriented ourselves to the good in the particular circumstances which we continuously encounter as teachers and as adults? Is not one of the core requirements of being a teacher to ask children to learn to do what they cannot do? Do we not ask children to extend their reach beyond their grasp and dream of boundaries as horizons which can only further enhance their knowledge and skills? The gift of being a teacher is knowing when to encourage such activity and when not to. But not to be engaged in the same activity as a teacher teaches the wrong lessons. To live in the postmodern age is to be de-centered, but that does not mean that one is totally disorientated.

(3) Postmodernist thinking brings one to the awareness that it is no longer possible to speak in the name of others in terms which encompass and capture. This awareness escalates the tension in my understanding of my teacherly substitutive responsibilities. I am called upon to act for the other. As a parent and as a teacher I must act or not act when called upon by the child to do so. Whether I act or do not act, I assume responsibility in both cases. Postmodernist thinking, of the kind I understand, does not preclude the ability to act responsibly. It is possible to act in a postmodern sense. Such actions may be considered responsible if they serve to guide the other's voice and experiences. But it is irresponsible, in a postmodern sense, to attempt to managerially reduce another's history to mine through my actions. Is it not irresponsible to seek to systematically eradicate another's way of knowing in accordance with some dominant monologue where everything spoken is labelled as being in the name of reason, theory, politics, or "mankind"? To embrace a postmodernist condition of knowledge and practice is to be responsively responsible to the evolving community story and yet to be responsively responsible to and for one's own personal professional story. All this must be understood, in turn, through an awareness of the hermeneutics of the larger historical story. To act in a postmodernist way means to reflectively and thoughtfully move in a direction which is agogically[24] ethical and

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[24] See van Manen, 1991, pp. 221.

responsible. Postmodernist thinking does not make one's life any easier. It does not offer an efficient or an effective way to live and to journey together. But it does offer something else--a hope that we can, in speaking together, similarly give voice to and respect our differences, and to be similarly responsible for the differences we speak of.

The modern-postmodern condition of knowledge opens spaces for teachers to explore and know their own and others' stories, and to face those stories, and to deconstruct those stories. Teachers must re-learn to dialogically speak with their own stories which have often been separated from, or devalued by, and perhaps marginalized within the dominant story. It is from this reflective awareness perspective that teachers must act as if they know what is good, virtuous, and fruitful in their relations with students. That could be a postmodern teacher's greatest challenge. But it could be a pedagogically-sensitive teacher's greatest gift to his or her students--to show, as an exemplar, how it is possible to be with others in a thoughtful and tactful manner even in a postmodern world. Postmodernist thinking is taking us in that pedagogical direction and not away from it.

> The nineteenth and twentieth centuries have given us as much terror as we can take. We have paid a high price for the nostalgia of the whole and the one, for the reconciliation of the concept and the sensible, of the transparent and the communicable experience. Under the general demand for slackening and for appeasement, we can hear the mutterings of the desire for a return to terror, for the realization of the fantasy to seize reality. The answer is: let us wage war on totality; let us be witness to the unpresentable; let us activate the differences and save the honor of the name. (Lyotard, 1989, pp. 81, 82)

Recapitulation

This chapter, via a constructive and affirmative reading of Lyotard's *The Postmodern Condition*, sought to offer an overview of some of the tensions between what might be characterized as modernist thinking and what might be characterized as postmodernist thinking especially with respect to the modern institution of education. This chapter is also an attempt to suggest that contemporary society's current condition of contingent tension may prove to be pedagogically fruitful. There are dialogical spaces being created, forged, and opened in, around, and between society's foundational discourses. These spaces enhance the possibility of becoming engaged in conversations regarding the extent to which all our thinking, all our pedagogy, and all our human qualities have inexorable transcendental groundings. What is at stake in this chapter is the suggestion that postmodernist thinking offers a way of facing the reflective questions that need to be responded to as one lives with others in an increasingly uncertain world. If the pedagogy of living with children is an ongoing project requiring a constant, a responsive, and a responsible recovery of what it actually means to belong to this earth and to our children, then is not postmodernist thinking also pedagogic in the sense it is responsive and responsible in its attending to the possibilities, in a societal and cultural sense, of a remaking, a recovering, and a restoring of what has been lost or forgotten in modern relationships. This chapter has argued that postmodern thinking offers a critique of modernity's intentions and practices. And this chapter has argued that within a postmodernist's attitude and practice there is an alternative exemplar offered of a way of being in the modern-postmodern condition.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGICAL REFLECTIONS

Seeing comes before words. ... It is seeing which establishes our place in the surrounding world; we explain that world with words, but words can never undo the fact we are surrounded by it. (John Berger.)

Ways of interpreting film

The cinematographic gift excels in transporting us as close as possible to "the variety, the texture, the skin of daily life" (Berger, 1977, p. 15).

> Film pulls us into the visible world: the one into which we are thrown at birth and which we all share. Painting does not do this; it interrogates the visible. Nor does photography--for all still photographs are about the past. Only movies pull us into the present and the visible, the visible which surrounds us all. Film doesn't have to say tree: it can show tree. It doesn't have to describe a crowd: it can be one. It doesn't have to find an adjective for mud; it can be up to the wheels in it. It doesn't have to analyze a face, it can approach one. It doesn't have to lament, it can show tears. ... What is saved in the cinema when it achieves art is a spontaneous continuity with all mankind. ... In the sky of the cinema people learn what they might have been and discover what belongs to them apart from their single lives. Its essential subject--in our century of disappearances--is the soul, to which it offers a global refuge. This I believe, is the key to its longing and its appeal. (Berger, 1977, p. 17)

The gift that film possesses often possesses us. There is a vital tension embodied in the cinematographic gift. Two people may look at a common screen and see totally different things.

> Works of art do not exist in a void and meaning is not something produced out of nothing. ... It may be difficult to work with art forms such as films, which are collaborative efforts and are very complex, but it is worth the effort. We can learn a great deal from our entertainments and arts once we realize they have something to teach us and learn how to go about analyzing them. (Berger, 1977, p. 2)

The first step in learning to see films is to acknowledge that there are many ways to see film. This chapter explores several ways of seeing film, but settles on one interpretative stance. What follows is a brief overview of some of the interpretive-analytical approaches currently being used for film study. This overview is derived from the scholarly works of Lynch (1980), Berger (1977), and Cook (1985).

(1) The micro approach. This approach uses detailed evidence to frame a general statement about the film. The following review of the action film *Marked for Death* (1991) illustrates this approach. Starting with a meticulously detailed analysis of the protagonist's clothing, the reviewer satirically makes a larger point about the insanity of being "dressed to kill".

> So, while maiming and killing several Mexicans, he'll wear: Black linen-cotton Versace matador jacket; dyed black Levi's 501s; black silk shirt, buttoned at the neck; gold Rolex. When it's time to pistol-whip a Jamaican crack dealer, Seagal changes into a black velvet jacket with two Oriental dragons stitched on the front and a tiger on the back. And for the climatic eye-gouging, back-breaking, impalement finale, the wardrobe includes a long black coat over a gray silk baseball jacket. Simply smashing. (*The Edmonton Journal*, February 18th, 1991.)

(2) The macro approach. A thematic statement about a film is made. Subsequently that statement is supported by specific references to the film. In *The Godfather* the eternal struggle between good and evil reveals itself in Michael's choice to avenge the death of his father. This tension is supported by the film's light and dark motif. At the beginning of the film, Michael is often seen full-figured basking in natural sunlight. By the film's mid-point, especially during the hospital scene, close-up shots of Michael's face are bisected half in light and half in shadow. At film's end, Michael closes the door on Kay and the screen goes completely black.

(3) The thematic approach. A film is often a site of recurring themes. These themes offer universally applicable lessons fundamental to human life. For example, the overriding theme of *The Corn is Green*, *To Sir, With Love*, and *Why Shoot the Teacher?* revolves around a teacher's desire to improve his or her students' lives while confronting tremendous odds.

(4) The sociological approach. If films reflect a collective dream reality, then both the sanctioned and the deviant behaviors of individuals and communities should be represented in the films. For example, *Three Days of the Condor* (1975), *Chinatown*

(1974), and *Marathon Man* (1976) are all post-Watergate films. As such these films document a nation's distrust of an increasingly corrupt political-economic power structure.

(5) The psychoanalytical approach. The psychology and psychiatry attributed to Freud, Jung, and Lacan are used to explicate relational events, to explain character motivation, and to analyze character behavior as depicted in a film. Horror films, in particular, have become prime subjects for psychoanalytical study.

(6) The historical approach. This approach may use three inter-connected techniques. First, it is possible to analyze events during the specific year a film was made to see if they offer any thematic, cinematographic, and sociological-psychological insights. For example, many films made in the 1950s reflect Cold War phobias about the threat of Communism (for example, *Reefer Madness*). Second, some films offer historical insight by being "period pieces". These films attempt to authentically duplicate the time and the space when the story actually occurred (for example, *Ben Hur*). Third, a collective of films may be explored via sampling across successive decades. This may reveal a historical progression (for example, studying the similarities and differences in how adult-adolescent conflicts are depicted in films from 1930, 1960, and 1990).

(7) The genre approach. There are numerous aspects of films that permit identification of a specific film as falling within a kind or style. The western, science-fiction, horror, detective, teen-pic, gangster, musical, and comedy are some recognized genres. For example, the genre of action-adventure featuring films such as *First Blood*, *Rambo: First Blood Part 2*, *Rambo III*, all the *James Bond* films, *Die Hard* and *Die Hard II*, the *Indiana Jones* movies, the *Terminator* series, and the *Aliens* series all share common traits.

(8) The auteur approach. This approach is driven by the assumption that the director dominates the final product. Viewing many movies by one director (such as Ford, Coppola, Spielberg, Truffaut, Peckinpah, Stone, or Hitchcock) enables the identification of

thematic preoccupations, recurring motifs, common incidents, and stylistic characteristics specific to that director's films.

There are many other way of seeing (interpreting) films. Each way is rooted in its own assumptions and makes its own claims. The point of briefly exploring the approaches named here and by alluding to the many others not explored here (some of which are "modernist" and other "postmodernist")--such as the semiotic[25] approach, feminist approach, Black approach, post-metaphysical approaches, and technological approaches, or combinations of several of these approaches--is simply to show that interpretation is a pervasive human activity even in film circles. Within this pervasive human activity of interpreting this project also offers a specific way of seeing films.

This project's approach to film

The fundamental perspective of this study is pedagogical. As has been argued in Chapters One and Two a postmodernist orientation toward film may create the possibility of seeing films pedagogically. What follows is an outline of how deconstruction as a postmodern analytic strategy may facilitate this possibility. Any reference to deconstruction requires first a reference to the philosophical writings of Jacques Derrida.[26]

Inspired by selected writings of Heidegger and Nietzsche, Derrida attempts to explore a new way to grasp the meaning of meaning. Several assumptions are core to Derrida's attempt. First, there is Derrida's characterization of the modern project. Modernity is a complex and a heterogeneous phenomenon. However, the multifaceted appearance of Modernity, as our presently named world construction, is deceptive. The modern world's consciousness has grown directly out of theoretical and practical shifts that honor empiricism, positivism, and rationalism as the systems of thought[27] by which to understand the human world. Correspondingly, the overriding principle of contemporary life is that a modern citizen must performatively engage in tasks which facilitate a rigorous, reasonable, and rational control over every natural and social phenomenon and force. Understanding, progress, and the emancipation and the liberation of humanity can only be achieved when the goals and values advocated by such a positivistic vision of the world are completely understood as the norm and the model to be emulated and perpetuated by every citizen. Second, Derrida assumes that a quintessential characteristic of being human is the use of language. He assumes that a specific exploration of the nature and structure of language opens the possibilities to displace, dismantle, or exceed the entire Western intellectual and cultural tradition.

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[25] Semiotics as the human science of signs studies the life of signs, what constitutes signs, and what governs signs. See Barthes, R. (1975). *The pleasure of the text.* New York; Hill and Wang and Barthes, R. (1986). *The rustle of language.* New York; Hill and Wang.

[26] See Derrida, J. (1976, 1978, 1979, 1981, 1984).

Within his characterization of modernity and the possibilities language offers to delegitimate modernity's foundational tenets, Derrida states that in one form or another the great Western philosophical traditions actively perpetuate a vision of modern life based upon two intellectual cornerstones. These cornerstones are "the metaphysics of presence" and "a logic of identity". The result of honoring of these theoretical visions is that almost every aspect of modern life is guided by forces, structures, or relations that seek to privilege presence over absence (thus the metaphysics of presence) and totality over chaos (thus the logic of identity). For Derrida these foundational cornerstones are also explicitly evident in, as well as supported by, a modernist conception of the structure of language. However, it is in the exploration of the structure, role, and function of language, or as Derrida prefers textuality, that Derrida has suggested there is the possibility to see modernity's increasingly evident failures to legitimate itself. As language-using beings, our meaning-making will always be deferred. By giving greater weight to this deferral, rather than to the modernist promise of its transcendence, which most Western philosophical texts and intellectual traditions have honored to date, Derrida may be said to be original.

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[27] Empiricism is the name of the philosophical doctrine that espouses the understanding that all knowledge is derived from experience. Any legitimate understanding of life requires a reliance on controlled observation and experimentation. Positivism is the name of a system of philosophical thought elaborated by Auguste Comte (1798-1857). This system of thought suggests that humankind can have no knowledge of anything but actual phenomena and facts and their interrelations. Such a system of belief rejects all speculation concerning ultimate origins or causes. Rationalism is the name of a philosophy that suggests that the formulation of opinions must be governed by relying on Reason alone. Reason itself is the source of knowledge.

Deconstruction strategies

In North America scholars such as Norris (1988), Ulmer (1984), and Culler (1981, 1982) have attempted to translate and work through Derrida's often impenetrable writings. These scholars offer helpful guidelines from which to speak purposefully and constructively about specific deconstruction strategies that offer opportunities for a close rhetorical analysis of a text.[28] However, a deconstructive reading is not to determine the text's meaning; rather it is an exploration of the ways in which the foundations upon which the text rests, in actuality, undermine the seemingly readily apparent fixed meaning of the text itself. Deconstructing a text is a sort of foundational flipping that suggests the text is susceptible to other, and different, yet equally legitimate interpretations. But a deconstructive analysis does not replace the interpretive process. Rather deconstructive analysis encloses interpretation within a more complex process of a double reading. While paradoxically acknowledging the legibility of a given text, deconstructive strategies simultaneously demonstrate the text's own inevitable subversion of that legibility. With deconstruction taking its lead from the essential arbitrary nature of the text itself this ensures that no "proper" or "correct" methodology[29] can ever be formulated for all texts. In this sense the interpreting process must consciously be understood as unique, open, and continuous.

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[28] All phenomenon and all events are considered by most postmodernists to be encoded "texts".

[29] "Methodology" in an empirical, positivistic modernist sense means a theoretically complete and procedurally exact way of doing that, in turn, appeals to an explicit, universally applicable meta-procedure.

There are strong examples of deconstructive literary criticism by Paul de Man of the work of Yeats and Proust (1983), Walter Micheals of *Walden* (1977), Barbara Johnson of *Billy Budd* (1980), and John Brenkman of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (1976). These examples offer persuasive evidence of the rigor of deconstruction analysis. However, there are only a few examples, to date, of extended deconstructive analysis applied to film--Boyd (1989) of Hitchcock's film *Vertigo*, During (1990) of Coppola's *Apocalypse Now*, and Burnette and Wills (1989) of Truffaut's *The Bride Wore Black* and of Lynch's *Blue Velvet*. In attempting to combine interests in pedagogy, film, and deconstruction this study offers a new thrust.

Specifically, then, the deconstructive techniques utilized by this study begin with the general premise that the Western world is constructed not upon a peaceful co-existence of facing terms, but upon dichotomous hierarchies reinforced as a consequence of positivistic thinking fostered by the Enlightenment project. Operating from this premise deconstruction begins with a most careful exploration of the structured genealogy[30] of a dominant concept in a text. At the same time there is a determining if the privileged term which emerges can, or cannot, name what may have been concealed, or excluded, by the privileged term's very presence and its supportive discourse. By focusing on the dominant term it is hoped that this term will show how it undermines the very philosophy it asserts. In turn the dominant term will point to the submerged term on which it relies. This revealing may be accomplished by identifying the very operations that produce the sacred grounds, the key concepts, or central premises upon which the dominant term is founded (Culler, 1982).

> A deconstructive project emerges ... only by dint of iteration: imitation, citation, distortion, parody. It persists not as a univocal set of instructions but as a series of differences that can be charted on various axes, such as the degree to which the work analyzed is treated as a unit, the role accorded to prior readings of the text, the interest in pursuing relations among signifiers, and the source of metalinguistic

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[30] "Genealogy" is an inquiry procedure via the exploration of the history of the present, which looks to the past for what is evident today.

> categories employed in analysis. The liveliness of any intellectual enterprise largely depends on differences which make argument possible while preventing any definitive distinction between what lies within and what without. (Culler, 1982, p. 228)

With respect to deconstructive strategies available for use for pedagogical cinematographic research three are evident: (1) The first strategy consists of three movements: (a) The first movement is to "dramatize" how a specific dominant discourse replicates, in its own terms, a binary opposition evident in Western intellectual history. Such oppositions could be speech-writing, male-female, mind-body, reality-appearance, and so on. The first term in the dichotomy is usually privileged. The right-hand term is usually regarded as a complication, a negation, a manifestation, or a disruption of the first term. (b) In the second movement the deconstructive intention is to "reverse" the opposition through arguments secured from the contextual surroundings supportive of the privileged term. This is an attempt to show the non-privileged term is really the prior term. The left-hand term is a special case of the right such that the right-hand term is the condition of the possibility of the left-hand term. This revelation begins the undermining of the opposition and of the specific centricism (logo, phono, phallo, etc.)[31] under exploration. (c) The third movement is a synthesis-like "overturning" of the privileged term thus revealing that its repressive, exclusive boundaries could not exist without that which has been negated. For example, in the speech-writing dichotomy speech could be envisioned as a form of writing and both elements (speech and writing) may be understood within their differences yet re-united as a form of "archi-writing". To summarize these three movements Culler (1982) writes:

> To deconstruct an opposition, such as presence-absence, speech-writing, philosophy-literature, literal-metaphorical, central-marginal, is not to destroy it, leaving a monism according to which there would be only absence or writing or literature, or metaphor, or marginality. To deconstruct an opposition is to undo and

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[31] "Logocentrism" refers to a system of modern hegemonic thought that claims legitimacy by reference to external, universally truthful propositions. "Phonocentrism" refers to a modern tendency to focus on the act of speaking or privileging of the oral text. The spoken word is given special status over the written word. "Phallocentrism" refers to the modern tendency to privilege a male dominant patriarchal system over another way of knowing or being.

> displace it, to stipulate it differently. Schematically, this involves several distinguishable moves: (A) one demonstrates that the opposition is a metaphysical and ideological imposition by (1) bringing out its presuppositions and its role in the system of metaphysical values--a task which may require extensive analysis of a number of texts--and (2) showing how it is undone in the texts that enunciate and rely on it. But (B) one simultaneously maintains the opposition by (1) employing it in one's argument and (2) reinstating it with a reversal that gives it a different status and impact. When speech and writing are distinguished as two versions of generalized protowriting, the opposition does not have the same implications as when writing is seen as a technical and imperfect repetition of speech. The distinction between the literal and figurative, essential to the discussions of the functioning of language, works differently when the deconstructive reversal identifies literal language as figures as deviations from proper, normal literality. (pp. 150, 151)

(2) A second deconstruction strategy is to look for key words, central images, definitive moments, and definitive relations that frame the text's privileged term. These elements not only point to the dominant term, but also provide traces indicating the violence inherent in the dominant term's oppression of its opposition. Through careful teasing out of these traces, different lines or directions of inquiry become a possibility. (3) A third deconstruction strategy is to pay close attention to the marginalized features of a text. These features often point to the text's dominant oppositional tension. In the margins there is often an identification of the exclusions on which hierarchies may depend and by which they might be disrupted. A concentration on the marginal is an identification of what in a text resists the identity established for it by other readings.

In summary, Boyd (1989) writes:

> In practice, deconstructive criticism involves the close rhetorical analysis of a text, not to determine its meaning, but rather to explore the ways in which it undermines any readily apparent meaning and necessarily renders itself susceptible to mutually incompatible, but equally legitimate interpretations. It replaces the interpretative quest for a single determinate meaning with ..."the careful teasing out of warring forces of signification within the text itself." Or rather, instead of replacing the interpretative process, deconstructive analysis strategically encloses it within a more complex process of what Derrida calls "double reading," paradoxically acknowledging the legibility of a given text while simultaneously demonstrating the text's inevitable subversion of that legibility (p. 146).

The pragmatics of doing this project

The films chosen for this study will be read as texts. Certainly any reading of a filmic text is an interpretative activity. Still it is possible, indeed necessary, as with any interpretative activity, to see the film as more or less complete, reasonably accurate, and a societally correct (sanctioned) interpretation of what it means, in this case, to be a teacher engaged in an educative relationship with her or his students.

The films chosen for this study are those which professional critics, personal and professional friends, students, and teaching colleagues have suggested are inspirational, purposeful, and meaningful in their cinematographic treatment of teacher-student educative relations. The use of commercial feature film as data may prove pedagogically instructive not only by illustrating the structural vitality of the pedagogical relation, but also by showing the poverty associated with the absence of such a relation.

As a way of proceeding, the selected films are presented and explored via three readings:

There is a "straight up" telling of the film's story-line. Executing a shot-by-shot analysis of any film is a difficult task. Seldom do shots remain static. The camera is constantly sliding and gliding from close-up, to medium, to long shot all in a single scene. Still this first reading attempts to present a scene by scene telling of the film's story through the use of dialogue and description. In addition to this synoptic overview of the film transforming it from a visual text into a written text, this first reading also features a series of interruptions. The storied text is interrupted by means of ***Italic-face*** type insertions placed in brackets [ ] in the filmic text. These interruptions are an attempt to point to certain features of the film's discourse that may be significant in the discussions to follow regarding the presence (or absence) of the pedagogical relation. This interrupted reading also initiates a dialogue-like opening for the second reading.

The second reading attempts to utilize commercially available reviews of professional critics who have turned their attention to films chosen for this study. Even in the most commercial reviews there are often insightful pedagogical commentaries.

The third reading is a deconstructive reading. This reading seeks to use the openings and possibilities offered in the first two readings to explore what is framed in the specific film with respect to the pedagogical relation. This reading has the filmic text face its own contradictions and assumptions regarding its chosen representations of an educative relation.

Recapitulation

The purpose of this chapter has been to advocate a specific way of seeing-interpreting contemporary films. Different circumstances and different interests could have dictated other approaches by which to do a close reading of films. Although there are no examples from which to compare or contrast the interpretive way chosen to do this project, nevertheless this study attempts to be rigorous, disciplined, and guided by a specific intention. That intention is embodied in a hope that the three "realist" films to be read, in the manner suggested here, will open the possibility for a pedagogical orientated exploration of the educative relations depicted in contemporary cinema. This is the pedagogical purpose that drives this inquiry's way of proceeding.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE CONTEMPORARY FILM INDUSTRY'S FORM AND CONTENT

"The cinema is a more or less modern thing, and it ought to be used, now and again, as a means of getting something clear about the life that takes hold of us, and attempts to pretend that the hold is a handshake." (M. Miller.)

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is not to present an overview of how the American film industry has depicted educational relations between teachers or parents and children (young people). Nor is this chapter a specific exploration of the "Horror-Slasher Picture" or the "High School Picture" as those genres that are specifically linked to depictions of adult-child relations.[32] Rather this chapter raises issues about the modern film industry and how it chooses to present images of children, childhood, and adult-child educational relations. Although a postmodernist tone may be evident throughout this chapter the specific films mentioned and the film industry in general are not subjected to a systematic deconstructive analysis. It is hoped that by exploring the contextual milieux associated with the depictions of adult-child relations as represented in and reflected by the contemporary film industry a framework may be provided from which to add some insights into the exploration of the pedagogical qualities depicted in the three selected films to be studied in depth in the chapters to follow.

The modern film industry

Human beings have often expressed the desire to see beyond the horizon. Films are a modern technological phenomenon which offers this possibility. The making of films began in 1893 with Edison's inventions of the Kinetograph and the Kinetoscope. Edison created cinematographic images of boxers, ballerinas, and bears which flickered inside his

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[32] See Reed (1989), pp. 132-159. Reed explores the history and substance of the High School picture as a special genre of American cinema.

Kinetoscopes and averaged less than one minute running time. Today image making in the form of full-length feature films is a multi-billion dollar industry.

Having the advantage of an overview of the last one hundred years of cinematic history, it is becoming increasingly evident that the 1980s is turning out to be a significant watershed in the business of making films. The 1987 film *Wall Street* characterizes this significant shift in the business of film making when Gordon Gekko (Michael Douglas), the stock-market manipulator, emphatically states that, "Greed is good."

> Hollywood listened, and applauded; thrilled by the sight of the formerly mild-mannered, second generation actor toughening up his image, it awarded him an Oscar. For the Motion Picture Academy, which generally tries to counter the industry's own money-grubbing reputation by focusing the limelight on such paragons of moral uplift as Ben Kingsley's *Gandhi* or Dustin Hoffman's *Rain Man*, it was a rare tip of the hat to the new economic realities .... During the past decade, the biggest Hollywood dramas have played themselves out, not on screen or behind the camera, but in the executive boardrooms. (Kilday, 1989, p. 60)

Historically the incorporation of the American film industry, leading to the conglomerate take-over mania of the 1980s, began quietly enough in the 1950s with the retirement, death, or departure of the founding moguls of the Hollywood studios. As Hollywood strove to cinematographically show the societal turmoil of the late 1960s and early 1970s, it was behind these scenes that the business of film making moved to embrace a program of financial stabilization via conglomerate ownership and modern management techniques. This movement to "industrialize" the business of film making is still in progress today.

In 1960 it cost $2 million dollars to make a movie. In 1980 the costs reached an average of $8.5 million. In 1989 $18 million was the average. In 1992 a $30-50 million dollar price tag seems to be considered a bargain. These escalating costs do not seem to correspond to a conscious program of responsible fiscal management. Three inter-related factors illustrate why the incorporation of film making in America, in the 1980s, has become more difficult than imagined. (1) There was a shift initiated by the conglomerate take-over corporations in the responsibility for and the control over a film's budget. They selected to move control from film people, who traditionally guided the process, to their corporate financial people trained in bottom line accounting. As a result there have been massive miscalculations regarding the costs of making films. (2) There has been a shift in the expectations advocated by the new controlling corporations for greater profits with less expenditure. As a result the studios have became engaged in a high stakes game of monopoly competing vigorously for sellable film properties. (3) The actual timing of the shift to turn film making into a modern "corporate industry" unfortunately occurred during the recession sensitive Eighties. As a result, a studio's financial success or failure may now ride on a single film. Compounding this situation was the unexpected huge success and profits of *Jaws* (1975) and *Stars Wars* (1977) in the late 1970s. These successes convinced the corporate managers of the film industry that the cost of doing business in making films was worth the profits to be realized if they were the ones to obtain the Holy Grail of the mega-blockbuster. The film industry of the 1980s and now of the 1990s is a testimonial to this quest.

So the irony in the attempted incorporation and industrialization of American film making during the 1980s, and its search of greater profits, has been to link the industry directly to the conditions influencing the general Western marketplace. And in order to engage in the possibility of landing a major investment success, while locked in a fight-for-life economic struggle, the multinational corporations as owners of the major studios have turned to a resource which offers immediate returns with limited investment. The result is providing instant profits. Therefore, the major studios are now mining their film and television vaults for hot properties. With the growth of cable television and the unexpected popularity of the rental and the purchase of videos, the studios have in turn used the money to fund their attempts to make hit films. But as the history of film making shows over and over, the formula for cinematographic and commercial success is most elusive.

Many film journalists, in retrospect, not only see the film industry's current state of affairs economically, politically, and cinematographically as directly linked to the success and failure of the incorporation of the American film industry during the 1980s, but also they suggest that the industry today is still, politically and culturally influenced by the overriding dominance in America of the reign of Ronald Reagan. It is Reagan, a former B-grade film star, who emerged as the U.S. President during the late 1970s and early 1980s and it is his rise to power which has entrenched shifts both in American history making and in American film making.

> To group movies or anything else by decades is usually an arbitrary, meaningless, journalistic hook, but not the Eighties. This decade was coherent, organized, all but monolithic. Perhaps no other modern epoch--in this country--has been so dominated culturally by a single presence, a single beckoning, commanding gaze. There were times ... when it seemed that all images flowed from Ronald Reagan, and that all were returned to him. Reagan was, then, the audience, and throughout the Eighties it was as if almost all commercial American movies were made to please him, to flatter him, at the least not offend him--whether "him" referred to one of the many guises in which he chose to appear (militarist, visionary, common man, patriarch, adventurer, philosopher). (Marcus, 1989, p. 61)

Certainly some films made during the Eighties tried to find different stories to tell, other than those honoring the Conservative-Reagan vision for the world. However, many films favored by the film establishment and the movie going public during the Eighties seem to reflect the Reagan, and now Bush, conservative creed that success is grace and anything else is failure and, therefore, deserving of damnation.

The Terminator (1984) stands out as a particularly illustrative example of the many films constructed during the 1980s which systematically represent and reflect the film industry's verification of all that epitomizes the ultra-conservative movement of the 1980s. It is a film graphically illustrating America's attempt to re-capture its national self-respect. As a simulation of the Reagan superman, Schwarzenegger's cyborg, a matrix of metallic flesh and pseudo-human circuitry whose exaggerated "perfect" form and technobody renders the human obsolete, provides the message to all of America that it must return to its origins to regain its power. This film advocates an up-dated technocized version of the American can-do attitude and its insouciant attitude toward surplus carnage. Americans, as perhaps modernity's most lost souls, must recommit themselves to the desire which had enabled them to dominate the established modern world. Americans must move forward by speaking with conviction and doing with purpose. Of course, everything will be backed up with the threat of maximum force delivered without conscience or mercy.

However, there is something else often emergent throughout *The Terminator's* non-stop action. There exists a weird sense of self-effacing black humor throughout the film. There is a satiric presence embodied in Schwarzenegger's robotic killer--the terminator. It is this undercurrent of black humor which seems to provide the film with an opportunity to mock its own sanctioned and privileged vision of America. This filmic device of having the dominant story turn back on itself, to an extent, mimics the same process which began to significantly emerge (consciously or not) in many other aspects of life during the 1980s. With respect to *The Terminator*, and acknowledging its explicit honoring of everything Reagan-Conservative America stands for, the film itself, via a subliminal self-questioning, becomes a site where other stories are being brought forward from the shadows and into the cinematographic spot light--if only for a fleeting moment. Certainly, and especially in this film, these other stories are brought forward only to be eradicated by the dominant story. Still these other stories, even as adversarial fodder for the dominant story, do bring the dominant story face to face, if only momentarily, with its own shadows. Is it possible that what is really being revealed in some of the most modernist films of the 1980s, like *The Terminator*, is the postmodern turn? Is "Otherness" being presented via modernity's own black humor questioning of its exclusive processes? What are the pedagogical possibilities in exploring such tensions at work in modernity's most representative films?

Turning on the images of adult-child relations

It was not long after Hollywood began making films that the camera turned its attention to capturing images of children. This choice of subject matter did not hurt the credibility of film making which had begun as a rather marginalized technological innovation. The early images of children, as depicted in the first real motion pictures, are noteworthy. The residue of these early images is still evident today. Some of the most dominant early images are those of Charlie Chaplin's *The Kid*, or of sweet little Mary Pickford, or of Mickey Rooney's *Andy Hardy*, or of the *Little Rascals* and of the *Our Gang Kids*. But it is the Shirley Temple films which epitomized the early embodiment of the ideal film subject--a perfect little adult presented in a perfect little child's body. Temple, as "the" early film star, possessed the incredible ability to be cast as both a charming and a disarming innocent, and as a knock-'em-dead singing and dancing show business professional.

This early focus on the child as the all-singing, all-dancing, all-knowing impish superstar faded from the cinematographic narratives of the 1950s and 1960s. As the child stars of the 1930s and 1940s grew up so did America. With America's maturation the film industry also changed. No longer an infant itself, film making turned to grown-up subjects. With the increase in America's concern during the 1950s and 1960s for its post-war youth the teen coming-of-age film began to dominate the movie screens. There were films such as *East of Eden* (1955), *Rebel Without a Cause* (1955), *The Young Stranger* (1957), *Splendor in the Grass* (1961), *The Graduate* (1967), *Last Summer* (1969), *The Sterile Cuckoo* (1969), *Easy Rider* (1969), *The Last Picture Show* (1971) and the 1960s retrospective *American Graffiti* (1973).

With respect to depictions of the child and adult-child relations in the Seventies there are very few memorable images. Adult action-adventure pictures seemed to dominated the screen. But in the 1980s, and continuing into the 1990s, the images of the child and of the adult-child relationship again stimulated Hollywood's interest. The result is that not since the Depression of the 1930s, when Temple and Rooney were the cinema's biggest stars, has there been such a focus on children, childhood, and the adult-child relation.

Demographics offers a partial insight into this renewed interest in cinematographic representations of children and adult-child relations. This interest is itself a child of the postwar baby-boom generation; a generation which has grown up and is now having their own children (especially in the last 10-15 years). This is a generation which is numerically very influential politically, socially, and economically. It is also a generation that has become obsessed with the notion of parenting. The obsession, however, has proved as surface-oriented as has the obsessions of the boomers for everything else that has attracted their wandering attention from the 1970s to the 1980s. The film industry, which is increasingly sensitive to demands of numbers, has turned to catering to the societal demands of sheer boomer volume. Therefore, many contemporary films have taken to exploring the boundaries of childhood, as well as the theories and practices of America's educational system, its achievements, and the nation's parenting preferences.

There are plenty of "serious" films focusing on childhood and adult-child relations to indicate the 1980s really did signal a re-birth of the child-focused film. Some of these films are: *Ordinary People* (1980), *On Golden Pond* (1981), *Annie* (1982), *The Toy* (1982), *Karate Kid* (1984), *Last Star Fighter* (1984),*Witness* (1985), *Secret Places* (1985), *The Color Purple* (1985), *Mask* (Bogdanovich, 1985), *The Rivers Edge* (1986), *My American Cousin* (1986), *Stand By Me* (1986), *Baby Boom* (Shyer, 1987), *Golden Child* (1987), *Over the Top* (1987), *Three Men and a Baby* (Nimoy, 1987), *Blind* (Wiseman, 1987), *Beaches* (Marshall, 1988), *Big* (Marshall, 1988), and so on.

Briefly, there are two significant "children focused" films that emerged in the 1980s which require some exploration. (1) *Kramer vs Kramer* (1980) shows how an adult-child relation is effected and affected by the tensions of divorce. Significantly for the first time in a Western film, there was an attempt to show divorce through a realistic treatment of the children's, as opposed to an adult's, anxieties, apprehensions, and fears. The child in *Kramer vs Kramer* was not depicted as the all-singing, all dancing, all-knowing impish superstar as had been the cinematographic tradition. In this film there was a unique attempt to honor a child's subjective lifeworld and to suggest that a child's way of knowing the world was distinct from that of an adult's way of knowing the world. (2) *E.T. The Extra-terrestrial* (1982) is another big step in the cinematographic treatment of images of the child. In this case there is another cinematographic first. Specifically, the film's narrative is told through the eyes of Elliot (Henry Thomas), his bossy younger sister (Drew Barrymore), and his older brother (Robert MacNaughton). It is no coincidence the film is so constructed. Spielberg is the only American director to have worked closely with the French director Francois Truffaut (on *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*). Truffaut is internationally recognized as a cinematographer who produces powerful films which feature insights into a child's subjective lifeworld. Truffaut's films are impressive because the child's journey is treated with both a sense of gravity and a sense of humor. Spielberg's Americanized version of "children-sensitive" films miss much of the subtle tension of Truffaut's work, but still Canby (1982) writes:

> The Spielberg films are distinguished from most other American films with which they might be compared by the richness of their gently satirical social detail. The gallant youngsters of *E.T.* and the besieged ones in *Poltergeist* do not live in some unlocated American Never-Never Land but in California, in an all-too-real estate development. The houses, which look not as if they've been built but laid by a giant hen, come equipped with every possible kitchen gadget, hot tubs, suspended staircases, and walls that are probably paper-thin.
>
> The kids eat dreadfully over-sweetened cold cereals and waffles defrosted in toasters, and sleep in beds that are often full of potato chips. They play with remote control toys, drink colas that rot their teeth even as they're being straightened, and they go to sleep to the hum of television sets that are no longer being watched.
>
> Mr. Spielberg's vision of America is accurate without appearing to be merciless. His children live in a world as comically observed as Tom Sawyer's, and their problems, thought not typical, call forth genuine emotions. When one sees any Spielberg film, one gets a good idea of what's going on in America, and how people are dealing with children, food, sex, booze, drugs, and the future. (p. 312)

It could have been assumed the film industry would have built upon the success--cinematographically, thematically, and financially--of films like *Kramer vs Kramer* and *ET.* It is true that from the mid-1980s to the present there has been a tremendous increase in cinematographic narratives which focus on the child and adult-child relations. There are films such as *Uncle Buck* (1989), *Heathers* (1990), *Parenthood* (1990), *Home Alone* (1990), *Troop Beverly Hills* (1990), *Kindergarten Cop* (1990), *Look Who's Talking* (1990), *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* (1990), *Lord of the Flies* (1990), *Honey, I Shrunk the Kids* (1990), *Problem Child* (1990), *Curly Sue* (1991), and *Our Little Man Tate*

(1991). Indeed, the film industry seems committed to selectively seeking to make real life adult-child relations into reel life adult-child relations.[33]

However, the reality is that this increase in the exploration of adult child relations is quantitative only. There have been very few of the child-focused films offered of late which have followed up on the promise of *Kramer vs Kramer* or *ET*. It is difficult to name a Western film which attempts to authentically explore the child's voice or to depict child's subjectivity as distinctly different from that of an adult's. In fact, many of the films which focus on children and adult-child relations of late have become depictions reflective of the singularly regressive state of affairs which is currently dominating contemporary life. Recently there have emerged many films which illustrate this regressive turn. It is a turn Hollywood has also taken in its depictions of the treatment of the child in contemporary cinema. A representative film showing aspects of this turn is *Home Alone* (Hughes, 1990).

Home Alone, like many other films recently released, shows a significant shift in the intent of the film industry to actively seek to commodify images of the child and to construct films as total consumer packages. This movement reflects a strong trend in the contemporary world to increasingly commodify human wants and needs and to create sites of conspicuous consumptive behavior.

The promotional photo of *Home Alone* features the film's protagonist Kevin (Macaulay Culkin) mouth agape and hands pressed to each side of his tortured face. The image has a striking resemblance to Edward Munch's study of angst in his painting *The*

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[33] McGillan and Rowland, in *American Film*, released a poll of 54 U. S. film critics rating the best films of the 1980s. The top 20 American films of the 1980s were:

1. *Raging Bull*, Sorsese, 1980
2. *E.T.*, Spielberg, 1982
3. *Blue Velvet*, Lynch, 1986
4. *Hannah and Her Sisters*, Allen, 1986
5. *Atlantic City*, Malle, 1981
6. *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, Spielberg, 1981
7. *Platoon*, Stone, 1986
8. *Once Upon A Time in America*, Leone, 1984
9. *Prizzi's Honor*, Huston, 1985
10. *The King of Comedy*, Scorsese, 1983
11. *The Dead*, Huston, 1987
12. *The Right Stuff*, Kaufman, 1983
13. *Tootsie*, Pollack, 1982
14. *The Fly*, Cronenberg, 1986
15. *Amadeus*, Forman, 1984
16. *Rain Man*, Levison, 1988
17. *Melvin and Howard*, Demme, 1980
18. *Terms of Endearment*, Brooks, 1983
19. *The Killing Fields*, Joffe, 1984
20. *Brazil*, Gilliam, 1985

Scream. Some film critics suggest that *Home Alone* is director Hughes' study of the archetypal trauma of abandonment. In *Home Alone* (1990) Kevin is accidentally abandoned by his loving parents. They become so busy getting ready for a Christmas vacation they fail to take notice that they have left one child behind. Kevin is left alone. Initially he breaks all the adult house rules. He jumps on the bed, reads *Playboy* magazines, destroys his brother's room, and eats ice-cream for every meal. Then Kevin's house becomes the target of thieves. It is at this point the movie turns back on itself. In the defense of his home Kevin becomes the prototype of the completely modern boy-man by playing at being a thoroughly modern man-boy. Through an incredible display of almost cartoon-like violence and with sadistic glee Kevin obliterates the would-be burglars who do not seem to know when to quit. The result of this contemporary archetypal struggle of lost and found is that *Home Alone* became a $120 million (before video release) blockbuster.

So what is it about *Home Alone* which makes it representative of the new brand of film as well as a new way of film making? *Home Alone*, like other films currently vying for blockbuster status, only offers the pretext of responsibly exploring the subjectivity of childhood. What this film really does, as opposed to what it claims to be doing, is to seek in a most calculating manner a way to enhance the commercialization of and commodification of the images of modern childhood. This manipulation of images brings the business of film making in line with what is occurring in almost every consumption site in the Western world. The "kid business" is what is currently selling in the Western marketplace.

Certainly children have been a target of the economic-merchandizing-advertising sectors for some time. This is not remarkable news. However, there is something new in the latest shift in cinematographic representations. Depicted in contemporary film narratives, such as *Home Alone*, there are strong suggestions that everything a person, as a modern citizen, could or would ever need or want is right there on the screen to be consumed. Reinforcing the resurgent American capitalist tradition to honor an individual's right to consume (and, thus, to liberate himself or herself) everything on the screen is presented as if it were for sale. This includes childhood.

The present shift in film content signals a turn in film making. The film itself has become the sales pitch. Films are being constructed with a blatant concentration on and unabashed glamorizing of the close sites of conspicuous consumption (think of Kevin's conspicuous consumptions in *Home Alone*). This reflects and represents what is currently privileged in the contemporary industrialized world. Simply the movie makes its pitch by becoming "the" pitch. Many films are now being packaged internally and externally as commodities to be consumed. *Home Alone, Curly Sue, Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, Hook, Batman* are but a few examples of films being packaged and retailed not unlike Lite beer, or Coke, or the Big Mac.

It is the deepest desire of those who produce consumer products, and this now includes many film producers (Hughes was an advertising man before he was a film producer), to attempt to make sure that the appeal of the product does not outlast the moment that it takes to consume the product. Conceived and sold as a consumable product, just like the many products it now sells, so does the film come to pass right through us. It is no different than the other ever-ready products ever-present in the all-encompassing consumer-oriented marketplace. As consumptive audiences we are coming to accept more and more the film as "the consumptive product". After experiencing a film we are often left with nothing but a vague and often angry craving for another one--just one more. Seldom do we see a person rent just one video. We often feel the same way about the food we eat, the clothes we wear, the lifestyles we live.

This conditioned consumptive aspect as a current turn within the film industry may offer an answer to the boom-bust cycles from which the industry suffers. If the packaging of a film can be properly managed, then the industry of film making might be on the verge of securing a controllable source of income. Packaging and selling films via saturation advertising, associated promotional events, early look-see clips, making the film's stars available to talk shows in advance of release, free-ticket promotions, special advanced showings, corresponding musical videos, or merchandizing linked directly to the film, and so on all serve, in a pre-calculated way, to prepare the audience to be brought back time and time again to consume the product. Is this a conscious effort on the part of the studios to construct and refine a film appetite among commodity-hungry consumers? Is there proof in the current movement back to the movies in record attendance numbers that this packaging of films is working? Could it be the corporate owners of the studios are putting aside attempts to manipulate the film making process because it is a necessary expenditure, and rather are turning their attention to attempts to control the consumptive audience as a controllable source of income? What does this mean for the artistic and thematic qualities of films?

It does not take long for the barracuda-like reflexes of a product-exploitive industry to spring into action when they realize there is a profit to be made.

> All across America, armies of casting directors are combing shopping malls, infiltrating elementary schools, even going to summer camps in search of fresh and adorable faces to turn into box office gold. Not since Shirley Temple pouted her way into America's heart ... have child actors been in such demand--thanks in large part to last Christmas' smash hit *Home Alone*. Not only is it the third-highest-grossing film of all time, it spawned the first bona fide child star this country has seen in 50 years. (Carter, 1991, p. 95)

In the land of supply and demand the task at hand for the American film industry is to supply cinematically correct images of children.

> Casting directors usually begin by looking at kids "in the business".... But many film people say they prefer to cast nonprofessional children. They claim that a child who has acted before, especially in commercials or sitcoms, no longer has the unadulterated childlike quality from which a pure and naturalistic performance can be carved. "They're still fresh at five or six" ... "but you get a lot of ruined ten-year olds in this business." (Carter, 1991, p. 95)

So the search is on for children waiting to be "found" by Hollywood. When found many of these children are used once or perhaps twice. Then they are returned to piano lessons, sport teams, or schools as quickly as they were removed. Other children who are often re-used and then discarded suffer traumatic after lives directly proportional to their stardom. The talk shows and the tabloids are brimming with these retrospective stories.

> Realizing that "real kids" have an advantage when it comes to film, managers, agents, and parents will often put a lid on children's TV work. When Alisan Porter, the ten-year-old star of John Hughes's latest, *Curly Sue*, was offered a role on a sitcom last summer, her mother, Laura Klein-Weiner, reluctantly turned it down. "I was just very afraid that after she'd done her leading role in a film, doing a TV series would blow it," she says.
> Finding an unpolished gem also has its bottom-line advantages for a studio. And producer Dale Pollock says, "Everyone is out looking for the next Macaulay Culkin, because who can afford Macaulay anymore?" (Mac's salary for the *Home Alone* sequel is rumored to be close to $5 million).
> ... [However] child actors face some very tricky realties: with puberty breathing down their necks, there is tremendous pressure to choose projects wisely. "It's one of the real drawbacks to working with kids," says New York young people's agent Nancy Carson. "Just as the child becomes bankable, suddenly nature has its way, they pube, and there you are."
> ... Robert Zuckerman ... treats children in the entertainment business ... "The parents lose distance on where they stop and the child begins," he says. "There's this delicate balance between being invested in your children so they are confident and sparkle but not so invested that you forget who you are and who they are. Some parents don't really hear their kids saying, 'I'm not interested in this anymore.'"
> One mother of a seven-year-old Mac Culkin look-alike, Jay, admits that she started taking her son to auditions when he was two and half. She went on 34 "go-sees" the first year without getting a job. Undiscouraged, she took him on 51 interviews the next year, finally snagging two commercials and a print job. This year, he has gone on 95 interviews and gotten two commercials, three print ads, and a regular role on a soap opera. "That was the good one," his mother beams.
> Jay's schedule includes dance class on Mondays, auditions on Tuesdays, piano lessons on Wednesdays, gifted-child classes on Thursdays, and--if there aren't any auditions--basically free Fridays.
> ..."Parents get involved in this orgasmic foray through the casting agencies," says Zuckerman. "The parents' fantasy is that the child will have everything they didn't. They start pouring energy into the kid.... It can be wonderful chemistry, but there are some definite risks." (Carter, 1991, p. 95, 96)

As previously suggested one might suspect the film industry has gone back to its roots by returning to a concentration on the images of the child. Initially film making presented itself through images of children. However, this images were selective and served to elevate conceptions of the child into a dream land of adventures far removed from the realities of daily living. Perhaps it was just a matter of time, considering the modern world, before these images were brought down to earth. With respect to the images of the child in the early 1980s, especially through Spielberg's films, this movement to ground images of childhood appeared to be potentially very positive. Add to this movement an increased interest by some North American adults in family values, family togetherness, and parenting, and it seemed the time was ripe for strong, deep, oriented, and authentic explorations of adult-child relations. All of this happened in a social context that claimed to be dedicated to a kinder and gentler treatment of others. Yet, and perhaps ironically so, it is difficult to find many contemporary cinematographic explorations of adult-child relations that are in any significant way meaningful or insightful with respect to how children as others should be treated.

Rather it seems the way cinematographic images of adult-child relations themselves are being presented has become more important than the substance of the relations depicted. The early premise behind some forms of film making used the child as a subject matter in order to break down public resistance to a new and "scary" innovative technology. Could it be that at present the modern film industry is now also using fabricated virtuous (dream-like) images of adult-child relations to covertly introduce an innovative aspect of film making--the film as a consumable product? Has film, as a consumable product, become a manufactured commodity that sells itself to an audience starved for rewarding images of seemingly purposeful adult-child relations?

In summary, there seems to be several tensions at play in the multifaceted societal elements currently at work in the modern-postmodern condition and that are influencing the contemporary film industry. Many of these tensions are evident in films made during the 1980s and the trend currently continues in films being made in the 1990s. The first element evident in contemporary films is that they reflect and represent the hegemonic Conservatism which has taken hold of Western thought and practice over the last twenty years. This Conservatism emerged to battle the societal turmoil which seemed to threaten its foundational institutions during the 1960s. In times of societal flux human beings tend to look back to what is assumed to have been a simpler, a safer, and a more controlled time. Or conversely, they look forward and project idealized visions of how it should be. Images which support either or both of these movements tend to become honored in contemporary film making. The second influential element that is part of the contemporary scene is a dramatic shift in societal focus as one result of the current baby-boom generation's influence. Simply the boomers have brought their massive numbers to bear as a consumptive desire to explore selective aspects parenting, childhood, and adult-child relations. The third element suggests that images, in general, in the contemporary world are increasingly taking on much more manipulative degrees of objectification, commodification, and commercialization. Images are exploited and images are exploiting. And fourth, in all of this contemporary desire to reaffirm the traditional goals and aspirations of the modern project, there is increasingly an undercurrent that things have not been as they were assumed to have been and, in fact, things could possibly be other-wise. Imagine ali of this and more going on at once within a society in flux that is determined to provide the appearance of stabilizing itself. This tension between order and disorder provides some sense of the milieu out of which the three "realist" films chosen for this study have emerged.

Recapitulation

The purpose of this chapter has not been to explore in depth the changing cinematographic, social, economic, or political circumstances that have contributed to the present state of affairs within the contemporary film industry. Suffice to say that specifically with respect to the cinematographic treatment of the child, childhood, and adult-child relations in Hollywood films there has been and still occurring a shift in the presentation and representation of images. Some observers of the current cinematographic state of affairs suggest this shift in the treatment of images of adult-child relations corresponds directly to trends in societal conditions. That is the contemporary film industry is as ideologically restrictive and commercially exploitive as is the at large Western culture and society. Indeed, there is an escalating, assertive, and methodologically purposeful attempt by contemporary cinematographic producers to treat audiences as if they were wired consumers.

And yet beyond the aggressiveness of this latest trend in film making, Hollywood films still embody a promissory possibility. Films, by their very narrative nature, enable us (as the audience) to experientially see and hear through (beyond) the film itself. There are opportunities within a film's presentation to see the hidden workings of the very system that produces the film's chosen (privileged) story. There is always something doubtful about an unified illuminating representation of an interpretation of life. That something is the possibility of questioning that which offers to transport us into the film's immediacy. Rather it is often the film's gappy motion that moves us to question its most ideologically restrictive and commercially exploitive elements. This tension in a motion picturing experience has the possibility to transports us, via the interplay of the film's own inherent contradictory nature, to that which has been other-wise excluded. In the tensions in the films themselves, the film industry, and us as viewers there is an inherent assurance that the cinema is a potentially rich source for pedagogic insight.

CHAPTER FIVE

STAND AND DELIVER AS A PEDAGOGICAL EXEMPLAR: A QUESTION OF SUBJECTIVITY

Introduction

What follows are three readings of the feature motion picture *Stand and Deliver* (Menendez, 1988). First, there is a presentation of the film's story. This reading is derived from a scene by scene study of the video tape version[34] of the film released for commercial sale by the film's distribution company. This reading is interrupted with comments pointing to the presence and absence of pedagogical qualities as outlined in the work of van Manen and others. Second, there is a presentation of the voices of professional reviewers of this film. These commentaries are available in cinematic literary sources. Both reading one and two begin the pointing to emergent pedagogic themes in the film. Third, there is a deconstructed reading of the film. This reading points to pedagogical possibilities inherent in the stories not privileged by the film's selective narrative.

READING ONE: *Stand and Deliver* as a narrative [and *interrupted*] text

There is no greater satisfaction than knowing you have given it your best whether it be at work, school, or anything you do. If you persevere the results will be gratifying and you will be proud of your work. This is the feeling of *Stand and Deliver.* How one man, Jaime Escalante, took the time to work with a group of students and help them achieve success. He taught them calculus but the real lesson he taught was one of perseverance and courage. Jaime Escalante's dedication to teaching has inspired countless students to stay in school and develop their full potential changing the patterns of their lives forever. (E. J. Olmos.)

Principal characters in *Stand and Deliver* [35]

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[34] See Tashiro (1991) for an exploration of the suggestion that video versions of feature films provides a means for the "deconstructing" of films. Video offers, all at once, a space which standardizes, fragments, commodifies, objectifies, and segments classical cinema.

[35] The following musical scores are evident in *Stand and Deliver.* "Stand and Deliver" composed by R. Page, S. George, J. Lang and performed by Mr. Mister; "El Lay" composed by W. Herron and performed by Gronk; "Secret Society" composed by W. Herron, M. Valdez and performed by Los Illegals; "I Want You" composed by K. Clark and performed by Z. Schloss, K. Clark; "Pocho Jarocho" composed by M. Loya and performed by M. Loya; "Cada Quien por Su Camino"

Edward James Olmos as Jaime Escalante
Rosana De Soto as Fabiola Escalante
Carmen Argenziano as Principal Molina
Will Gotay as Pancho
Ingrid Oliu as Lupe
Vanessa Marquez as Ana
Daniel Villarreal as Chuco
Rif Hutton as Dr. Pearson
Lou Diamond Phillips as Angel
Virginia Paris as Chairwoman Ortega
Mark Eliot as Tito
Patrick Baca as Javier
Karla Montana as Claudia
Lydia Nicole as Rafaela
Andy Garcia as Dr. Ramirez

What follows is a scene by scene presentation of the story line of *Stand and Deliver*. As well there are bracketed [*italic*] interruptions that attempt to point out aspects of the pedagogic relation as depicted in the filmic text.

Scene 1. A close-up of running water fills the screen. The credit "Warner Brothers presents: An American Playhouse Theatrical Film" is superimposed over the water. A simple flute melody begins. The camera pulls back revealing concrete embankments of the Los Angeles river system. With the visual shift the music takes on a Latino beat. The title *Stand and Deliver* appears on the screen. A transition shot shows city streets clogged with automobile traffic. "Edward James Olmos." Close shot of a be-spectacled, balding Olmos in a blue Volkswagon drives along a freeway journeying into East Los Angeles. He drives by vegetable produce pedlars as they call out to passing motorists. Several scenes of East Los Angeles reveal themselves as the credits continue. Olmos drives past a wall mural depicting the face of a Latino male, and under the mural is the caption: "We Are Not a Minority."

The opening credits roll on as Olmos drives deeper into the East Los Angeles barrios. He drives past abandoned vehicles, packs of roaming kids, and wandering Latino musicians. [*Olmos' physical journey seems symbolic of those persons who also begin a journey in order to respond to the call to attend to something important his or her life. The wall mural, which reflects part of a community's struggle to define itself, also seems to indicate that Olmos is heading into a tense social situation. There is some hint of*

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composed by R. Perez and performed by R. Perez, M. Califas; "Contrabando del Paso" composed and performed by M. Loya, J. Guevara; "Vamonos Pal Norte" composed by M. Loya and performed by M. Loya, R. Perez, J. Guevara; "Wake Up John","Psycho Cha Cha" composed by W. Herron and performed by R. Perez.

foreshadowing that the situation in the barrios is both destructive and constructive. And overall there seems to be some evidence to suggest that generally there is community readiness to move on.]

Scene 2. There is a panning shot of a school's grounds. The shot comes to rest on a brick school building as students file into it.

Scene 3. "Based on a True Story" appears on the screen. Olmos enters a ransacked school office. A secretary is being questioned by a police officer regarding a break-in and vandalism (including a deposit of human feces) of the school office.

"My name is Jaime Escalante. I am supposed to teach computer science," interjects Escalante attempting to get the secretary's attention.

"We haven't got any computers," she replies back leaving Escalante standing at the counter. Math Chairwoman Ortega is in the office and she has overheard, and after introducing herself informs Escalante he will be teaching math. Escalante still insists he is there to teach computer science. Ortega leads Escalante from the office. [*Is the true story credit a required statement of authenticity? What does such a statement imply regarding the film's credibility? Must the film narrative be defictionalized in order for it to seem to be made more legitimate? It is also interesting how Escalante assumes he has one assignment, but is assigned another teaching area upon arriving at the school. Is he teaching in an area at the outer limits of his chosen discipline?*]

Scene 4. The scene opens in a teacher absent classroom. Students are milling about, talking, writing on the blackboard, or lounging at their desks. Jaime Escalante enters the classroom.

"Will everyone please try to find a seat," requests Escalante.

"Let's put our desks in a circle and discuss our feelings," shouts a student (Tito) while stroking a girl who had joined him in his desk.

"One body to a desk," directs Escalante.

Getting off Tito's lap the girl asks, "Can we talk about sex?"

"If we discuss sex, then I have to assign sex for homework," counters Escalante. Some of the students hoot and holler at Escalante's quick and witty reply.

In asking the students repeatedly to take a seat Escalante realizes several students do not understand English. In Spanish he assigns these students seats in the front row. Those students displaced from the front are promised desks at a later date. Escalante then writes on the board, "This is Math 1A."

"I don't need no Math I get a solar calculator with my donuts," interjects a student voice as others snicker, and then inappropriately the school bell rings. The students dash out of Escalante's room. Left in an empty classroom Escalante enters the hall to see Principal Molina herding kids back to their respective classes. Molina enters Escalante's room saying something about a premature bell. A student (Claudia) makes a quick comment that she thought they were not supposed to discuss sex in class. Molina moves to the window and while looking outside through a pair of binoculars comments to Escalante, "They rigged the bell. Tricky little bastards." Molina leaves the room, but Escalante remains looking out the window until a piece of paper hits the wall beside his head. [*In this scene Escalante demonstrates a quick and responsive sense of humor rooted in an improvisational intelligence. And there is some indication that Escalante's students also are sensitive to the power of humor. Could this be a future common ground upon which to build a relationship?*]

Scene 5. Escalante's teaching day is over and upon approaching his Volkswagon he discovers a smashed window and the car's radio has been removed. [*Some school days may bring teachers to question why the teaching vocation has chosen them. Escalante must be wondering what he has gotten himself into.*]

Scene 6. It is early evening. Escalante is at home. He is taking out the garbage. His neighbor Joe, who is working on his boat in the driveway, calls to Escalante saying, "Jaime. When you coming aboard?"

"I get sea sick in the rain. Have you seen my boy?"

"Yes. He is here somewhere," responds Joe. Then Joe asks about the corporation Escalante works for. Joe has heard the corporation is shifting into personal computers. Fabiola (Escalante's spouse) appears just as Escalante informs Joe that he doesn't work for the corporation anymore.

"Jaime is teaching high school now," adds Fabiola.

Assuming Jaime has been laid off, Joe indicates Escalante should have come to his firm for a job. Escalante corrects Joe's mis-impression by telling him that he was not laid off. He quit to specifically become a teacher. Joe is shocked."A high school teacher! Oh good. That's great!"

Escalante's son returns on his bike and is reminded by Escalante that taking out the trash is his job. [*Joe (as Joe Public?) seems to give voice to a common attitude about teachers by non-teachers. What does this say about Joe's relationship with his teachers? Or what does it say about what Joe thinks about the teachers who teach his children? It is interesting, however, that Escalante left a "good" job to become a teacher. This raises many questions about the sense of vocation many dedicated teachers have. These teachers only feel good themselves when they have the opportunity to express their sense of care and love for children. There is a nice visual quality to this scene. Escalante is looking for his own child just has he is looking for the profession that will take him into the lives of children.*]

Scene 7. In his classroom Escalante, dressed in an apron and hat, stands with a big cleaver in his hand. Without warning Escalante brings the cleaver down chopping an apple in half. He has everyone's attention. Having passed out selectively cut apples to several students Escalante, in turn, asks, "How much you got?" Initially the responses are limited. Pancho has eaten his apple to the core. "You owe me 100%. I'll see you in the People's Court," says Escalante when he sees Pancho's apple core. But when Escalante asks Ana about her cut apple, she whispers, "Missing 25%."

"That's right. Missing 25%," whispers Escalante back as the others seem to strain to listen. "Is it true intelligent people make better lovers?" asks Escalante to a blushing Ana.

Enter Angel and Chuco. Chuco approaches Escalante at the front of the class and asks, "Who's calling the shots?"

"Got a slip?" asks Escalante.

Chuco drops the slip as Escalante reaches for it forcing Escalante to pick it up from the floor. Angel offers Escalante his slip. Placing Chuco in a front desk Escalante asks Angel to stand at the back until another desk can be found. Escalante sets the class to work then approaches Chuco. All the students are watching closely.

"Where's your equipment?"

"Don't got any," replies Chuco.

"Got to come to this class prepared," whispers Escalante.

"Do the work in my head," counters Chuco.

"You know the timetables?" asks Escalante of Chuco.

"I know the one's (Chuco shows his thumb), two's (raises his index finger), and three's (raises his middle finger to Escalante)."

"Fingerman," says Escalante. "I have heard about you. Are you the Fingerman? I'm a finger man too. You know what I can do? I can multiple by 9." Using his fingers Escalante proceeds to show Chuco how to do finger multiplications (3x9/6x9/8x9). Chuco squirms in his desk as he is the focus of attention. As Escalante shows Chuco finger math, the bell rings. The class leaves immediately. Escalante asks Chuco to stay behind. With everyone gone except Angel, Chuco tells Escalante to cut him a deal.

Escalante replies, "First thing I can teach you is some manners." Angel approaches at this comment and is about to touch Escalante's pocket protector when Escalante says, "I wouldn't do that if I was you or you will not be able to count to 10." Angel smiles. He taps Escalante on the cheek twice. Chuco and Angel leave, but not before Chuco suggests that Escalante will learn soon enough how the educational game is played at this school. [*A* *powerful scene illustrating the strength of Escalante's commitment to teaching students about mathematics. Escalante also continues to demonstrate his pedagogic vitality and improvisational sense of humor. His sense of humor lightens Chuco's threatening gestures and, ultimately, disarms Chuco. Add to this Escalante's talent for improvisational spontaneity, and he is able to show his passion for knowing and learning with respect to his discipline. But above all he shows a sense of knowing subjectively what it might take to make Chuco respond in a way Chuco was not prepared for. Escalante shows his resolve to the others in the classroom. His convictions are grounded in an understanding of the world such that if he did not purposefully take on Chuco in front his class it might very quickly become Chuco's class. Also Escalante will not be physically bullied by Chuco's way of thinking; a way of thinking that Escalante considers at odds with his way of knowing the world. Escalante establishes himself as the adult in charge of the situation, and he will not waiver in his responsibility to his vision of what it means to educate students.*]

Scene 8. In the school yard Coach, a physical education teacher teaching math, tells Escalante about his troubles in trying to stay in front of the students with the subject matter at hand. Escalante replies,"You either love or hate math." As the men part Escalante offers Coach any help he needs. Then Escalante notices students rushing to gather around a fight between two gangs. Chuco is involved and he calls Angel, who is near by, to his side. Escalante intercepts Angel preventing him from entering the fight. [*In talking with Coach, Escalante initially shows his love of his chosen discipline. He speaks as if a disciple of mathematics. He alludes to the qualities of an interpretative intelligence that enhance the embodiment of mathematics. As well he refers to the attentiveness needed in order to respond to what calls you to be a teacher of students as well as a teacher of a discipline. Escalante seems to be telling Coach that the desire to become a teacher of mathematics can overcome other weaknesses such as lack of knowledge, or training. Also indirectly in confronting the confrontation between students, Escalante illustrates his care for students and his responsibility as a teacher and an adult to respond. His resoluteness to do the right* *thing and to stand up for what he considers right is also activated. Like many teachers Escalante spontaneously finds himself moving to the conflict before he knows what he is going to do when he gets there.*]

Scene 9. In his classroom Escalante calls the roll. Angel and Chuco enter late. They sit at the back of the room. Moving to the back Escalante says to the class but directly at Chuco, "I'm Le Cyclone from Bolivia ... a one man gang ... THIS is my domain. Don't give me no gas. I jump on your face. I tattoo your chromosomes." The students laugh, and Escalante begins an Algebra lesson around the concept of positive and negative numbers. As Escalante attempts to evoke a response from his students he claims to be the champ of Algebra. He suggests that only knowing how to add and subtract means that a student is only qualified to pump gas.

Chuco says, "Knocking one over is better than working in one, Kimo?"

"Really, I'm a tough guy ... tough guys don't do math. Tough guys deep fry chicken for a living. Want a wing or a leg man?" mocks Escalante. The students laugh. Continuing the lesson, Escalante seeks to use a beach analogy. The sand out of a hole dug in the beach is positive and the hole itself is negative. Escalante asks Angel to answer the equation -2 + 2 = ?. "Come on net-head," exhorts Escalante of Angel. "Anyone can do it. Fill the hole. You can do it. -2 + 2 = ?." Then leaning over Angel Escalante whispers, "I'll break your neck ... like a toothpick ... click."

"Zero," replies Angel surprising himself and his classmates.

"You're right. Zero. Simple. -2 + 2 = 0. He simply filled the hole. Did you know neither the Greeks nor Romans were capable of using the concept of zero. It was your ancestors the Mayans that contemplated zero--the absence of value. True story. You burritos have math in your blood."

Chuco mocking adds, "Kimo Sabe. Knows everything." [*Escalante uses images his students seem to understand. He is direct and purposeful with his intentions. Escalante's resolve and intelligence are set up by a disarming sense of humor. He seems to* *know these students are ready to learn. He also seems to know that by using concrete and effective examples, he can demonstrate his passion for mathematics and his hope that his students will be successful at mathematics. Escalante also seems committed to doing whatever it takes to ensure a response from his students. He needs something to work with. As such, he uses rough humor, verbal threats, or even a physical presence.*]

Scene 10. At a math staff meeting Molina begins by saying, "I don't want to be the principal of the first school in Los Angeles to lose their accreditation."

Ortega instantly defends her math staff by claiming each person is doing the best he or she can considering the circumstances, the resources available, and the socioeconomic background of the students. Acknowledging Ortega's stance Molina still calls for ideas about how to improve the school's present academically poverty-stricken situation.

Ortega repeats her concerns by saying, "To get higher test scores there needs to be a change in economic conditions in the community." Coach pipes in that he did not want to teach math to begin with; he is a physical education teacher.

"We lack the resources to implement the changes the District demands," comments Ortega.

Molina reluctantly hears Sanzaki inform the group he has found a new job in the new year with the aerospace industry.

"How much does it pay?" whispers Coach to Sanzaki.

Molina says, "We have the remainder of the year before we are put on probation. If we fail we will lose accreditation."

Ortega replies, "If we fail! You can't teach logarithms to illiterates. Look, these kids come to us with barely a seventh grade education. There isn't a teacher in this room who isn't doing the best they possibly can."

At this point Escalante interjects, "I am not. I could teach more." Ortega quickly suggests that Escalante's newness at the school has clouded his sense of reason.

Escalante counter-claims that, "Students will rise to the level of expectations Senor Molina." Molina questions what Escalante needs in order to do more for the school.

"All we need is GANAS."

"What's Ganas?" whispers Coach to Sanzaki as everyone looks at each other questioningly. [*A tension seems to be developing with respect to Escalante's and Ortega's respective positions vis-a-vis students' competencies, abilities, and the educational process itself. For Ortega there are overriding psychological, sociological, economic and political circumstances that dictate the quality of the educational resources, students, and teachers available. Ortega seems to speak in terms that tend to abstract the pressing problems Molina is asking to his staff to face and attend to. She seems to be rejecting, via a socioeconomic argument, the core question Molina seems to be asking. That question is: what authorizes a teacher as a pedagogical leader? By rejecting this question outright Ortega does not seem willing to accept any responsibility for the students in her school. Escalante, on the other hand, offers a vision of hope in the face of the prevailing crisis. Optimistically Escalante's understanding of the world is embodied in a resoluteness that a teacher must be responsible to his or her students. This sense of responsibility seems rooted in an understanding that what is required to balance the equation of educational inequities is not greater applications of technology, but rather, according to Escalante, what is needed is the human quality of ganas (desire), or readiness. Escalante understands that a child's educative experience is connected to the way a teacher stands in (and understands) the world and also how that teacher sees the child. The educative experience a child knows is also deeply linked to his or her perceptions of who he or she is and who his teachers are. This question of positionality often brings a teacher face to face with the awareness of what it is that authorizes him or her to be with children in a pedagogical way.*]

Scene 11. In class Escalante announces a new learning environment modelled on the work place--a quiz to start every class, a major quiz every Friday, increased homework, and no excuses. "You already have two strikes against you. There are people in this world who will assume you know less than you do because of your name and your complexion. However, Math is the great equalizer." Escalante tells the students that when they go to a job bosses will not want to hear about problems, and neither does he. "You'll work harder than you ever have before and all I require of you is Ganas--Desire. I'm an expert in Ganas," claims Escalante. He hands out a quiz.

Angel is called from the room by Chuco just as a new student enters via the front door. Spotting Angel leaving by the back door Escalante points to the vacant desk for the new student (Rafaela). To the departing Angel he says, "Nice knowing you. Have a good day. So long." Rafaela sees everyone working so also begins the quiz. [*This scene demonstrates Escalante's growing set of expectations for his students. In defining his intentions Escalante hopes to offer a sense of security, safety, and support. He also offers, albeit forcefully, his giftedness as a readiness expert. If Escalante can structure the educative conditions in his classroom in such a way that enable his students' natural willingness to learn to be reborn, then he has accomplished something. Rafaela demonstrates the power of educative expectations by coming into the room and simply assuming she is to do the test on her desk. She does it because the others are doing it. She assumes that is how the class operates.*]

Scene 12. Angel corners Escalante after class and asks for a Math textbook. "Cut me a deal," Angel pleads after he promises to fly straight from now on. In the book storage room Escalante provides three books--one for Angel's home, one for his locker, and one for the classroom. In return Angel offers Escalante, "Protection Kimo. Protection." [*Despite the barter system whereby Angel offers Escalante protection for books, it is evident Escalante has awakened Angel's desire to learn. Escalante has been strong in his stance regarding his understanding of the educative relationship. Does Angel respect this strength? Or is it that Escalante is also offering a sense of hope. Escalante is establishing the boundaries of the relationship developing between himself and Angel. And yet Angel* *seems to think he is in control of what is going on. In this regard, does Escalante have some insights into Angel subjectively?*]

Scene 13. Over lunch break Claudia, Lupe, Pancho, and Tito discuss teachers and the school's accreditation problem. Referring to Escalante's Bolivian history Tito suggests that it may explain his Nazi/Gestapo-like tactics in class. The group decides a mutiny against Escalante's new regimented work schedule is in order. They will refuse to do the upcoming Friday quiz. [*It is natural for students to question what authorizes a teacher to do as he or she does. Also being rebellious, as part of the testing of adult limits, is a natural element in a youth's becoming an adult. For a good teacher such challenges are taken in this spirit and, in turn, can become pedagogical opportunities.*]

Scene 14. It is Friday and Escalante hands out the ten minute quiz. He provides the quiz instructions. Lupe, after looking at Tito and Pancho, does not begin the test. Escalante notices her refusal as does the class. "What is the matter with you?" whispers Escalante to Lupe.

"I'm not taking the quiz." When Escalante asks about her not turning in her homework either Lupe replies that the goat ate it. The students snicker.

"Don't do homework, don't got a ticket to ride," counters Escalante taking her exam.

"Give her the chair. Give her the chair," the students chant. Escalante places a chair at the front of the room. Lupe comes forward and grudgingly sits. Escalante calls the class back to the quiz and they buckle down to the task, including Tito and Pancho. Escalante leans over Lupe, who is seated at the front, and says, "Now you're the show." With her other conspirators doing the quiz Lupe is isolated. Escalante tells Lupe she is a bright kid, top kid, and should know better. Lupe returns to her desk giving Tito and Pancho "the" look. [*Escalante handles the challenge with a certain roughness, but he is also reassuring in his advocacy of Lupe's talents. It is as if Escalante walks the line between being tactless* *and yet very tactful. He seems sensitive to a student's need to resist, but he is also resolute that he or she learn from the situation something about when and how to resist.*]

Scene 15. Angel finishes his math homework. He places a blanket on his resting grandmother. He then leaves to go for a ride in Chuco's car.

Scene 16. Lupe is at home. She makes her father's work lunch and after he leaves she tries to get the family's children ready for bed. Her exhausted mother comes home from work. She reclines on the couch and asks Lupe to put out the light. Lupe is unable to finish her homework.

Scene 17. After driving around all night Chuco drops Angel off at school. Chuco mockingly tells Angel he is late for Escalante's class. Angel dashes off. [*These three scenes--15-16-17--attempt to show the difficulties Escalante's students face in their homes. They are trying to become good students, but often circumstances make tremendous demands on the students. They must often act as if they were adults acting in guardian, parental, care-giver, or playmate roles. In most cases the students are required to act like adults without being treated like adults.*]

Scene 18. The class is in progress as Angel enters. He draws everyone's attention. "Late, late, late," call out the students in unison. Escalante tells Angel to go to counselling. Perhaps he could pick up a course in something like a shoe shine box construction.

Angel replies, "O.K. You're the man. Why not put them in college so dumb taco-benders like me can pick their vegetables for them, collect their garbage, or clip their poodle's toenails." Angel leans against the board simulating a crucifixion. "I may be a sinner, but I am willing to pay for my sins," says Angel.

Escalante smiles and then relinquishes, "O.K. One shot deal. Sit down. See you at 3:00 o'clock." But Angel pushes the moment even further. He has also forgotten his pencil. The class laughs, but the students' laughter is brought down when Ana says Angel can have her pencil. She will not be back after today's lesson. There is silence. [*Angel's spontaneous biblical references reflect some of the same qualities of Escalante's ability to* *improvisationally know what to do and what to say. Perhaps Angel's actions also create the possibility for Escalante to increase his understanding of his students' sense of variability, their fluctuations in confidence, and their periods of doubt. Still the students are demonstrating their desire to persevere. It is ironic then that as a community of learners is forming, their vulnerability and fragility is tested by Ana's announcement that she is leaving.*]

Scene 19. Escalante and Fabiola are in a Latino restaurant. Ana, who works in the cafe, is called over by her father, the cafe owner. There has been an error in the Escalante's food bill calculation. Ana introduces her father to Escalante. Escalante asks Ana's father to sit for a moment. Quickly Escalante brings the conversation around to Ana's leaving school. Escalante insists that Ana is a top student and could be the first in her family to finish high school and go to college.

"She will probably get pregnant and not finish college," says Ana's father pessimistically.

"She talks about going to medical school," counters Escalante optimistically.

"No. I don't think so," says Ana's father with resolve.

"She should make her own choices," counters Escalante. He continues to press Ana's father insisting that if she stays at the restaurant she will end up with a rather limited life. She could go to college and be someone. Ana's father takes offence at Escalante's comments. He began washing dishes for a nickel an hour and now owns the restaurant. He asks Escalante if that has been a waste of a life.

"I washed dishes also when I came to this country," states Escalante.

"Your husband comes into my restaurant and then insults me," comments Ana's father to Fabiola.

"Excuse my husband," replies Fabiola. "He just wants what's best for Ana."

Ana's father refuses the payment for the meal saying he does not need Escalante's business. Escalante counters by indicating the money is a tip. As Escalante leaves he tells

Fabiola there is hot chili in the food in order to sell more beer. [*Escalante cares enough for Ana's present condition and her possible future position that he attempts to influence Ana's father on her behalf. At the moment Escalante knows Ana does not have the strength to speak for her self. Escalante offers his voice as an alternative. Committed to a sense of hope for Ana's future and having an understanding of her pedagogical needs, Escalante knows he must make a stand for her because she has what it takes to be someone in the world. Escalante models a pedagogical stance by showing up at the father's cafe. His actions show that he cares for Ana's abilities and for her life. In doing so with such conviction, emotion, and strength Escalante causes Ana's father, as a parent, to question his stance and wonder if he is doing the right thing by Ana. By addressing the situation pedagogically Escalante uses the tensions already in place to raise normative questions about what it means to be a parent, and he does so in a pedagogical way.*]

Scene 20. The scene opens as the class finishes a clapping game. Escalante moves to a math problem involving numbers of a gigolo's girlfriends. Molina and Ortega enter to observe. The students repeatedly fail to get the equation. Escalante keeps pushing. To Tito's incorrect response that the gigolo Juan may be bisexual Escalante retorts, "I have a terrible feeling about you." To Claudia's incorrect response Escalante says, "You're good now, but you're going to end up pregnant, barefoot, and in the kitchen." To Rafaela's wrong equation Escalante comments, "Please forgive them for they do not know what they do." To Javier's incorrect guess Escalante pleads, "It's not that they are stupid it's just that they don't know anything." At that moment a meek voice from the doorway provides the correct equation and answer. It is Ana. She is back. Everyone applauds. The scene ends with Pancho asking about what practical value such math has in the real world. Escalante asks Molina if he could maybe get some gigolos in for a practical demonstration. "Just kidding," Escalante adds. [*This scene really establishes Escalante's talents and gifts for improvisational humor. And yet in a tactful way, although not always a subtle way, he structures opportunities for his students to test and be tested by the knowledge they desire.*

Ana's return speaks volumes for the shift occurring in Escalante's once very troubled classroom. These students are ready and committed to learn. They are willing to be led by Escalante. They trust and respect his hope for them. They are secure in the risks they take within the developing educative relationship being established between them and Escalante.]

Scene 21. The ganas class arrives by bus at the computer firm Joe Goodall (Escalante's neighbor) works at. Escalante subsequently discovers Joe's daughter is studying calculus at her high school.

Scene 22. Escalante opens the math staff meeting by expressing his desire to teach calculus so the students may challenge the Calculus Advanced Placement Test. Molina chuckles. Ortega's face registers shock. She then goes on to insist that Escalante's students do not have the background in trigonometry or mathematical analysis. Escalante insists these particular students can learn the basics at a six day a week summer school session, and then they can begin calculus in September.

Ortega asks, "You expect our best students to go to summer school?" Molina quickly adds that summer classrooms are reserved for the remedial classes.

"To turn this school around you have got to start at the top," charges Escalante. After commenting that there are teachers in the room who couldn't pass the A. P. test. Ortega also suggests that if the students try and fail, Escalante will be responsible for destroying what little self-confidence they have left.

But intrigued by the strength of Escalante's commitment to his vision, Molina asks, "Can you make this fly?"

Escalante says emphatically, "I teach Calculus, or have a good day."

"Well if this man can walk in here and dictate his own terms over my objections I see no reason for me to continue as Department Chair," says Ortega standing to leave the room. "I am thinking about those kids. If they try and do not succeed he will shatter what little self-confidence they have. These are not the types that bounce back. Have a good day." Ortega walks out. The scene ends with a close-up of Escalante. [*Molina seems to be an administrator governed by the expediences of appearance and performance rather than by being responsive to a call to minister to those in his charge. Ortega seems surrounded by defensive fortifications designed to protect and entrench even further the status quo. She cites chapter and verse the positivistic arguments that decidedly favor an objectifying vision of students. She seems to confuse pedagogical theorizing with other discourses that often lapse into abstraction. She lives as a teacher in danger of losing touch with what it means to live with children as a possibility. Finally, she seems not to see the erosion of the pedagogical meaning flowing from the lifeworld itself. When Ortega speaks of a student's subjectivity it is in terms of him or her being poverty-stricken as the result of socioeconomic factors. In contrast, there is Escalante. Simply he offers an optimistic vision of the world that is hinged on the possibilities of creating pedagogical spaces for his students. Escalante is asking questions of the school's intentions in a pedagogical way. He does so by asking himself if he is doing the right thing for his students. It is this doubting he seeks to respond to, and it is this doubting he brings the rest of the staff into contact with.*]

Scene 23. It is summer holidays. There are students frolicking in the parks, or working summer jobs, but Escalante's students are at summer school. Escalante insists the Japanese, who desire a vacation, are paying him because they are tired of making everything and want America to pull its own weight.

Scene 24. A new school term begins. Coach informs Escalante he attempted to get another job after he was released from his teaching contract, but after many mis-adventures in attempting to find another job he was re-hired to teach. As Coach's story concludes a desk falls from an upper level walkway crashing behind Escalante. A fruitless pursuit of the villains by Coach and Escalante follows. Escalante is dramatically short of breath after the chase. Then in a comical moment Coach bends over to pick up some material dropped in the chase and he rips the seat of his new suit pants. [*This scene may foreshadow problems* *with Escalante's health. Indeed, many teachers become consumed by the desire to be there for their students to such an extent they seldom say no to others or yes to themselves and their health suffers.*]

Scene 25. Escalante's students must sign a new contractual arrangement, such that they must attend one hour before regular class, take two classes a day with Escalante, attend school on Saturdays, and work through every school vacation. "Pass the Advanced Placement Exam and get college credit," is Escalante's offer. Trooping out of class Lupe complains to Escalante that the senior year should be a time to relax, and not a time to work even harder than ever before. Escalante asks Tito about Saturday morning classes after playing in his band late on Fridays.

Tito replies, "Look man you like to scare us but that gets old real fast."

Angel arrives late and says, "Hey Kimo? Aren't you proud of me I'm the first dude here." Then pointing to the board asks, "What's Calculus?" [*Escalante seems to live pedagogically in the tensions between difficulty and ease, delight and rancor, and trust and resentment. Still he is actively hopeful about his students' future. He has a desire to stand up for his students until they can stand up for themselves. He seeks to show the way. And for the most part his students recognize he has their best interests at heart.*]

Scene 26. The scene opens with a long shot of traffic on a distant bridge. The shot withdraws to the foreground showing Claudia's home is within earshot of the roar of the not so distant traffic. Claudia describes the origins and importance of doing calculus and the new contracted learning situation to her mother. Claudia's mother eventually signs the contract for Claudia but not without adding the caution that, "Boys don't like it if you're too smart."

"Mum, I am doing this so I don't have to depend on some guy the rest of my life." [*It seems ironic that it is a student who is trying to convince a parent that education is the opportunity to a better life. The parent can only counter with a sexually stereotypical comment. But Claudia demonstrates the power of her conviction to learn. Claudia does this* *in an introspectively intelligent way and in the process teaches her mother something about who this person named Claudia is becoming.*]

Scene 27. A classroom scene. The students file in. Escalante collects the contracts. "If not signed then no ticket for the show," he comments generally while making a specific comment to every student who passes. Pancho's letter is handed to Escalante unsigned. Escalante tells him to leave until it is signed by Pancho's parents. Pancho claims he has an offer of part-time work operating a fork lift. Two years in the Union and the job pays more than Escalante earns. [*This scene presents the seemingly continuous educational debate between that which is immediate and obtainable and that which must be deferred presently for future gains. In a very practical way each teacher must face questions regarding the reasons students are in his or her classroom.*]

Scene 28. Escalante is driving Pancho's car. It is night as he drives along. Then he asks Pancho, "Would you rather fix or design cars?" Pancho does not respond. Escalante asks Pancho which way to turn as he speeds toward a road barricade. "Right. Right," screams Pancho at the last minute as Escalante swerves to a screeching stop on a dead-end road.

Escalante says to Pancho, "All you see is the turn and not the road ahead." They sit in silence. [*A graphic example of a lesson taught and of a lesson learned. Escalante seems to know Pancho's pedagogical needs. Subjectively Escalante seems to know that Pancho is an experiential and pragmatic person. Thus Escalante opts to use a very dramatic showing as opposed to telling in order to get his point across. For Escalante to even be in the position he was with Pancho, in Pancho's car, illustrates how strong the relation between the two is becoming.*]

Scene 29. Lupe and Pancho arrive early for math class. The school gates are locked, but a caretaker lets them in. Later in the class Tito, the week-end rock musician, has fallen asleep. Angel points this out and Tito is roused by Escalante hitting him with a pillow. Tito recalls a dream of dolphins whispering imaginary numbers while looking for the fourth dimension. "Good. Go back to sleep," says Escalante.

A transitional shot of summer school students leaving the school at day's end. In Escalante's classroom the mathematics continues. Claudia looks out the window at those going home. "Claudia," says Escalante noticing her inattention, "You're fooling around too much on weekends. You got to do some work from the neck up." Escalante then points to Claudia's ambivalence and tells the class they must stay later than usual. He begins to collect money for food. Claudia gets up to leave.

"Where are you going? Late for another date? She got more boy friends than Elizabeth Taylor," says Escalante to the class.

Claudia responds, "I don't appreciate you using my personal life to entertain this class." She bolts from the room. Escalante pauses for a moment and then he rushes after Claudia. He catches her in the hall. When Escalante asks Claudia what the problem is she speaks of the pressures on her from her boyfriend and her mother not to be so committed to her schooling. And, of course, her hair and clothes are always messy. "I hate my life," cries Claudia. Escalante smiles. Claudia also smiles. They embrace. [*Escalante makes a mistake, but he learns from it very quickly. Escalante is often verbally very rough with his students. His sexual innuendos with Claudia cross the line. But he knows instantly he must correct the wrong. Teachers often cross the line, and just as often many do so without realizing it. But as soon as Escalante did, he realized his error. At that moment did Escalante encounter a felt sense of Claudia's subjectivity? Did he feel her hurt and pain? He does attempt to correct the wrong by re-establishing contact, and he does so physically. Coming together in this way offers more than words. He touches the student supportively and apologetically communicating care, concern, and comfort. Escalante, by going after Claudia, displays the quality of self-criticalness. Instantly, he realizes he has learned something from a student's perspective. He feels the pain he inflected and he tries to sooth that pain. Both Escalante's subjectivity and Claudia's subjectivity are affected and effected by this encounter.*]

Scene 30. At a public health clinic Angel waits with his ill grandmother. Angel is frustrated by the degree of non-service and tries to get his grandmother some medical attention. Angel is emphatically told his number will be called.

Scene 31. Pancho is at the black board but fails to answer the problem outlined. He belittles himself for being the stupid one in the class and shouts, "I can't handle calculus. These guys have a better chance of making the AP Calculus Exam without me." And to Javier's snicker, Pancho insists that the class not laugh at him.

"How can we laugh. You are breaking our hearts," interjects Escalante.

"Don't do this Kimo," warns Pancho.

"How noble giving himself up for the group. Do you have the Ganas?" asks Escalante of Pancho.

"Yes I have the Ganas," responds Pancho.

"Do you want me to do this for you?" asks Escalante pointing to the board.

"Yes," responds Pancho.

"You're suppose to say no," shouts Escalante. "We will have to work through the Christmas break."

Angel enters the room at this moment. He has returned from taking his grandmother to the clinic. Escalante notices Angel sneaking in and asks him to go see the counsellor. Angel says, "Everything is cool ... my grandmother ...."

"Clock out. Game over. You lose," interrupts Escalante.

"You never listen to nobody," shouts Angel.

"Send me some postcards. Call me. We will do lunch. We all love you," says Escalante as he turns his back on Angel.

In a fury Angel throws a desk. Escalante says to Pancho, "Looking at that guy I think he has a bigger problem than you." [*Escalante seems more concerned not about Pancho's inability to do the problem but by his lack of desire and willingness to continue trying. This apparent lack of desire hits hard at Escalante's own desire for his students to* *succeed. Then immediately Angel enters and he also seemingly shows a lack of concern, or desire, for his studies. Escalante reacts accordingly. It seems that Escalante's intentions for his or her students, at this particular moment, have consumed his ability to listen to what his students are telling him about who they are. It paradoxical that Escalante is so close to the subjectivity of his students on some occasions, and at other times he blatantly dismisses their subjectivity as he pursues his own exclusive agenda.*]

Scene 32. Escalante is at home. He is on the phone to a parent about a student's work. His family is gathered around the dinner table. Fabiola describes to her oldest son just how busy his father is. Escalante is working 60 hours a week, volunteering to teach night school, and visiting junior high schools in his spare time. As Escalante comes to the table his youngest son asks for help with a math problem. Fabiola points out what Escalante does for his students, and yet his own son is doing very poorly in math. The door bell rings. Angel has brought his grandmother over to explain his being late for math class. Escalante questions Angel's tactics of bringing his grandmother over at Christmas time to beg for him. Angel retorts, "I need calculus to get me a good career Johnny." [*There is an obvious desire and commitment on Escalante's part to his students and to their success. But he is also in jeopardy of becoming consumed by the desire. Escalante's desire to help his students has taken something from his own family. In the second element of this scene Angel's improvisational resoluteness show just how influential Escalante has been. Angel has come to understand the world with a sense of humor and a vitality much like Escalante's. Simply Angel turns the table on Escalante and does what Escalante might have done to get himself back in the class.*]

Scene 33. In a darkened classroom Escalante seeks an answer to a problem displayed on the overhead projector. Several students supply an answer. Each answer is identical. And yet for some reason Escalante refuses to accept the correct answer and he comments, "You are like a blind man in a dark room looking for a black cat that isn't there. What's wrong with you guys. No way. No way. You should know this!" In frustration Escalante bolts from the room.

"He finally blew a head gasket," says Pancho. [*The signs of being consumed by the passion for teaching begin to surface in Escalante's daily teaching practices.*]

Scene 34. The scene is an English as a second language classroom. Escalante, who is teaching the class, excuses himself. He leaves the room and moves down the hall and into the stairwell where he appears to suffer a heart attack.

Scene 35. In the ganas classroom Javier writes a problem on the board. "Come on you guys," implores Javier of the others who are sitting about.

Tito snaps back, "Shut up and sit down."

Rafaela comments, "I told him to take it easy. We just sat back and watched him burn-in."

"Burn-out," corrects Claudia.

Angel interrupts to say Escalante brought all this upon himself. Pancho defends Escalante's intentions for them. He calls Angel one macho asshole. Angel spits at Pancho. They begin to scuffle and Tito intervenes. Molina enters the room and stops the confrontation. He says Escalante is in hospital under observation after a mild heart attack, and then Molina introduces the substitute teacher, Mr. Schloss. Molina leaves and takes Angel and Pancho to the office. Back in the classroom Schloss makes a comment about the AP Exam in two weeks. Unfortunately his expertise is as a music teacher. The students just look at each other. [*The students demonstrate their caring about and concern for Escalante. They know that their relationship with Escalante is, for the most part, special and personal. But Escalante, like many teachers, has taken on too much. Sometimes a teacher attempts to do everything for his or her students. There is much to be said for seeking a balance. Still it is Angel who really offers some insights into the situation with Escalante's health. Angel seems to suggest that the students themselves are the ones who must make the difference in their own lives, via self-making, because Escalante can only offer so much. As an aside it* *is interesting to note that Molina really seems to believe in Escalante's work when the only substitute teacher he offers is a music specialist.*]

Scene 36. From his hospital bed Escalante convinces a nurse to smuggle problems to his students. This happens moments after his wife and son leave his room having informed him of the doctor's orders, "No job related activity for at least a month."

Escalante's reply to his wife had been, "I want another doctor." [*This shows either Escalante's incredible resoluteness and his overwhelming desire to be a teacher, or that he has learned very little from his heart attack.*]

Scene 37. In class (two days later) the students are working on one of Escalante's hospital bed assigned problems. As the class works Escalante quietly enters the room and then shouts, "Hi." The surprised students stand and applaud. Escalante thanks the substitute teacher. He brushes aside questions about his health by saying, "I should be here with you." Then he lines the students up against the wall in a snake line. He stands before each one in order to pose a challenging question. Lupe is first and she answers incorrectly. She must go to the end of the row. Pancho is next and his response is correct. "You are the best," says Escalante to Pancho. [*Is this teaching method of stand and deliver the source of the film's title?*]

Scene 38. The students are seated separately in a library to write the AP Exam. We are privy to Ana filling in her data and significantly there is a place for ethnicity on the test dated 1982.

Scene 39. Appearing on a secluded beach the ganas students rush into the ocean to splash about. Angel remains on the beach until coaxed in. He strips to his shorts, plunges in, and frolics with the others. [*Is this a symbolic baptism?*]

Scene 40. Pancho is at home working on his car. He notices the mailman delivering the AP Exam results. Cautiously he opens the letter. He has passed. [*If Pancho passes surely the others did.*]

Scene 41. At a school ceremony Molina congratulates the ganas students. Less than 2% of all high school seniors nation wide attempt the A.P. Calculus Test. Amazingly no other high school in Southern California had more students passing the exam than Garfield High. Angel enters the ceremony late. He seems intoxicated. Escalante covers for Angel when a teacher inquires about his strange movements by suggesting that Angel just walks like that naturally. Molina reveals that 18 students wrote the AP Calculus Exam and 18 passed. Then Rafaela interrupts Molina and motions Escalante forward. The students present a plaque to Escalante and they huddle together before cheering parents and teachers. The music is soft and warm.

Scene 42. Lupe and Pancho frolic with younger siblings. They spray each other with water. The phone rings. Lupe answers. It seems to be bad news.

Scene 43. Huddled on the football field bleachers the students meet with Escalante. Each has received a letter from the Educational Testing Service, the guardian of the Calculus AP Exam. Due to response irregularities in test scores, and based upon an unusual agreement of incorrect answers, ETS has no option but to challenge the students' scores repeats each student letter.

"English? What does it mean in English?" asks Pancho.

Javier explains that the ETS thinks they cheated on the exam. The reason seems obvious to the ETS, and that is the ganas students were too stupid to have different incorrect answers.

"These people are human. They can make a mistake," offers the optimistic Escalante.

"Kimo these people are calling us cheaters," says Ana. The shot widens and pulls back revealing the school mural that prominently dominates the wall behind: "Garfield High School--Home of the Bulldogs." [*In the presence of crisis never before faced by the students, they fall back on Escalante. He is there for them and he offers them hope and security.*]

Scene 44. Two investigators, Dr. Pearson and Dr. Ramirez, check the school's security system to ensure the confidentiality of the AP Tests. They see the secured vault, and in doing so tell Molina that the testing controversy is officially between ETS and the students and does not reflect on his administration. "We would like to resolve this with as little publicity as possible," suggests Pearson. Molina nods in compliance as he closes the vault. [*The crisis is now formally initiated. The arrival of the sanctioned representatives of the ETS indicates the hunt is on for the presumed guilty parties. It seems the ETS representatives first task is to control the amount and quality of information people may get.*]

Scene 45. Ana and Javier walk together. Javier wonders if the other students cheated. Claudia was having emotional problems. Pancho was way behind in his work. Ana believes that despite the pressures on everyone, she is sure no one cheated. Her father, of course, believes otherwise.

Scene 46. Pancho's car has broken down. He is upset thinking about the money lost having spent all his time studying math. He could have had a brand new car by now. Lupe tries to soothe him. Claudia notices Lupe's closeness to Pancho. She asks about them being "a thing." Pancho informs Claudia it is just something for the summer. Instantly Pancho realizes his error. He reaches for Lupe, but she is hurt and runs off. Claudia calls Pancho an asshole and runs after Lupe.

Scene 47. It is late. Angel and Chuco drive about in Chuco's car. Chuco wishes he could be up with the stars and free of earthly problems. Angel tells Chuco that stars are deceptive. The light from a star takes thousands of years to reach the earth. The star may not even be there in actuality because its end hasn't reached us yet. God could have pulled the plug and didn't tell anybody suggests Angel. Then Angel hangs out the passenger window of Chuco's car, and hurls insults and kisses at a female police officer driving by. The police pull Chuco over. The policewoman warns Angel to watch his smart mouth and Chuco gets a ticket. The police leave. Chuco pushes Angel to the ground. "That was real smart Esa," shouts Chuco who stands over Angel. Angel gets up and walks into the darkness as Chuco get into his car. [*Scenes 45-46-47 show how the tensions of the ETS inquiry affect each student. Where there had been an attempt on the student's part to trust others through a desire to take a chance on becoming successful they ended up with the same old results--failure. The ganas students went from what Escalante called hard earned success to what the ETS officials declared as a contrived failure. Where the students had developed confidence now questions, doubt, and disorder overcame them. With the results of the ETS questioning of the legitimacy of the students' success, the students begin to question many aspects of their personal lives and relationships.*]

Scene 48. Dr. Ramirez and Dr. Pearson meet with Escalante's students. Molina recalls his knowledge of Ana's family and asks her what really happened? Ana denies that anything happened. Molina insists Ana is not telling the truth. Then Javier, in a show of defiance, tells Molina to leave Ana alone. Javier gets up and leaves the room. Angel, seated at the back, seems moved by Javier's actions. Ramirez continues, "If you cheated, then let us know so you can go home and enjoy the summer." Then he tries to influence Rafaela by telling her he is from the barrios also. It would be alright to tell him if something was wrong.

Angel steps forward to tell the group they are finally caught. Why not admit it? The ganas kids look surprised. He tells the investigators he got the exam from the mailman and quickly adds, "I strangled him. His body is decomposing in my locker." He offers his hands to be bound. His peers roar with laughter. The inquisition is over. The investigators leave. [*This scene illustrates that despite being thoroughly shaken the students have also learned something from Escalante about the world and taking responsibility for self and others. They are also developing an increased sense of sensitivity toward the subjectivity of others. Javier stands up for Ana, and Angel stands up for everyone , and he does so using an almost Escalantese brand of stand up humor.*]

Scene 49. At Escalante's school a pre-written, unsigned letter of resignation appears in Escalante's mailbox. Discovering the letter Escalante takes it to Ortega. He asks her about the letter. She indicates it probably reflects the mess the school is in with the ETS investigation. Escalante asks her if she thinks the students cheated. Ortega comments that Escalante's students were under tremendous pressure. They would have done anything for him. When she watches the evening news on television many people are brought forward accused of all sorts of crimes. All have good lawyers. Some are convicted of the crimes they are charged with; others are not. But in each and every case, insists Ortega, everyone denies everything. Still it is Ortega's belief that if one is caught by the authorities, then they are usually guilty.

An angry Escalante replies, "Yup, I know exactly what you mean." He storms out. [*Ortega voices a commitment to an over-powering belief in appearance of justice. Her use of a legal discourse to speak about Escalante's students leaves little space for any doubt about their status. There seems to be very little understanding of the student's subjectivity in the legal stance Ortega advocates. The students appear guilty and, therefore, must be guilty.*]

Scene 50. Escalante is in the school parking lot. He discovers his car is gone. Coach drives by and offers Escalante a ride home. Escalante declines and begins walking. It is a long, long walk home. Fabiola sits on the couch waiting for her husband. Escalante enters and proceeds directly to the bedroom. Fabiola enters the bedroom when Escalante does not answer her calls. She finds him sitting on the bed with his head in his hands. Fabiola sits beside him and asks, "Jaime. Do you want to talk about it?"

"I may have made a mistake trying to teach them calculus."

"Regardless of whether they passed that test or not Jaime they learned," says Fabiola.

"Yes they learned that if you try real hard nothing changes."

"Quit," says Fabiola. "That's all you have left to teach. Quit."

"You know what kills me. They have lost the confidence in the system they are finally qualified to be a part of. I don't know why I am losing sleep over this. I don't need it. I could make twice the money and in less hours and have people treat me with respect," suggests Escalante.

"Respect," says Fabiola, "Jaime these kids love you."

The conversation is interrupted by a car horn outside the bedroom window. Escalante moves to the window and sees Angel, Chuco, and his "stolen" Volkswagon. It has been "souped up" with a new paint job and special wheels. "Check out your rod. We fix it up for you," says Angel.

Chuco pipes in that, "This is a going down town machine." [*This is a pivotal scene. Escalante is involved in something many teachers face daily. That something is the constant presence of self-doubting and self-questioning. There is something about teaching that requires a continual and essential responsiveness on the part of the teacher. A teacher questions his or her pedagogical nature when he or she asks: am I are doing the right thing for my students? These reflective moments are needed because many teachers' responses and actions are very spontaneous. That is the responses are not prescriptively pre-planned. It is only afterward that the pedagogically sensitive teacher is able to reflectively question his or her actions. This questioning, this doubting, is an essential part of what constitutes the pedagogical experience. Pedagogy is that something a parent and a teacher continuously must redeem, retrieve, regain, or recapture. Pedagogy in part is the reflective wondering about what authorizes a teacher as a pedagogue. Fabiola plays a strong part in the questioning process by acting as if she were Escalante inner self in dialogue. In her listening, and then in her pointed comments, she reveals herself in a strong pedagogical way also. But in the end it is Escalante's students who authorize his pedagogical intent and pedagogical responsibilities.*]

Scene 51. There is a wide shot of a square office tower that Escalante then enters. He appears in a huge waiting area with hat in hand. Entering a large meeting room Escalante introduces himself as the AP Calculus teacher from Garfield. Dr. Pearson and Dr. Ramirez introduce themselves. Escalante claims, as the students' teacher, he has a right to know what was wrong with the tests to warrant the investigation. The testing representatives insist the problem is between the ETS and the students. After much back and forth chatter, the investigators reveal to Escalante that there were unorthodox and illogical computations in the students' responses. Escalante counters that they all made the same errors because he taught them the same way, which was step by step. The investigators counter that there were so few errors as compared to other students' test scores and Escalante's students finished the test with time to spare. Escalante insists that his students should have been rewarded for their skills and not singled out for investigation.

"In this country one is innocent until proven guilty, not the other way around," adds Escalante. Then the "Catch 22" appears. The investigators insist the students can prove their innocence by re-writing the exam. Escalante counters that if they re-write they are admitting they cheated. Escalante then claims that if there is evidence of a conspiracy he should also be investigated. And what of the compliancy of the school, or the entire Latino community, in this matter. They must be investigated also. The investigators again insist the problem is between the ETS and the students. Escalante interrupts, "Yes, but if this was a Beverly Hills High School they would not send you two to investigate. These kids have Spanish surnames and barrio addresses!" Escalante is asked to leave after making what the ETS men consider an accusation of racism. Pearson notes that there are two types of racism--singling out a group because they are members of a minority and not singling out a group because they are members of a minority.

"My kids could teach you a thing or two Johnny," shouts Escalante.

The investigators again ask Escalante to leave or they will call security.

"Go for it," replies Escalante defiantly. "You haven't shown me the test. You didn't prove anything. I am going to prove you guys wrong."

As Escalante is about to leave Ramirez says, "I hope you do. This is not between you and me."

"Maybe not," says Escalante, "but if I catch you on the street I will kick the shit out of you." Escalante leaves. [*Different discourses seem to be at work in this scene. There is the discourse of authority, objectivity, and power that supports the ETS investigators argument. And then there is the discourse of pedagogy that supports Escalante's stance with respect to his students. The ETS men wish to elevate the discussion to a theoretically level via mathematical statistical correlations. Escalante seeks to bring the discussion down not to the specifics of mathematically correct numbers and percentages, but to the actual students involved. It is ironic that Escalante, the mathematician who claims math is the great equalizer, is now discounting the sanctioned legitimacy of the ETS's interpretation of the students' numbers. As Escalante tries to stand up for his students, is he not really asking the questions: who controls the numbers and in whose interest is the specific interpretation of the numbers in contemporary society?*]

Scene 52. One by one, beginning with Lupe, the students telephone the ETS to request a re-write of the AP Exam. They have one day to study.

Scene 53. Escalante's students begin again from page one of their text book. The re-write exam is to be tackled "step-by-step." They must "play defense." "Don't give the investigators any opportunity to call you cheaters. You are the true believers. You are the best. Tomorrow you will prove you are the best," says Escalante encouragingly.

The studying continues all day and then the scene shifts to later that night in Escalante's kitchen. He prepares a special meal of brain food guaranteed to last 24 hours. Claudia asks, "Are you afraid we will screw up tomorrow?"

Escalante replies, "No tomorrow is just another day. I'm afraid you will screw up the rest of your lives." Pancho decides to go home saying he has had enough. [*This scene moves to show the personal, special, and two-intentional relationship Escalante has created* *and foster with his students. This scene illustrates the power of community a teacher and his or her students can create by coming together in a pedagogical way.*]

Scene 54. Pancho arrives at Lupe's house and although it is very late she answers the door. Coming out onto the deck Lupe says to Pancho, "You cannot expect me to be your girlfriend at your convenience." Pancho nods. They embrace. [*This seems to show that Pancho has indeed learned something about life as well as mathematics.*]

Scene 55. The students gather to re-write the exam. The ETS investigators supervise. During the entire scene there are numerous shots of the students and the test questions, and the music is slow and ponderous. After some time Ana who has completed most of the test is forced to leave because of a selection interview for a placement in College. The others continue writing until time is called.

Scene 56. Escalante waits fretfully outside Molina's office. The secretary tells him in passing that the computers ordered some time previously have arrived. "Yup, that will do it," replies Escalante. He then sees Molina and asks about the test scores. Escalante insists Molina call the ETS officials. Reluctantly Molina does. The ETS tells Molina the scores are now verified. As each student's face is shown in a cameo shot, Molina records each name and score. All eighteen again passed. The music is upbeat. Escalante demands the original test scores be reinstated. Escalante leaves the school. Vibrant music fills the hallway as the numbers of students who successfully took subsequent AP tests are presented on a roll:

1982 ... 18 pass A.P. Calculus Examination
1983 ... 31 pass
1984 ... 63 pass
1985 ... 77 pass
1986 ... 78 pass
1987 ... 87 pass

Reviewing the reading:

Pedagogy embodies sensitive listening and purposeful observing

The scene by scene narrative of *Stand and Deliver* is an attempt at beginning to see the film pedagogically. That is to look at, and wonder about, the meaning and the significance of the educative relation as depicted in the film. What becomes evident from this initial wondering about Escalante's educative relations with his students is that as the film progresses Escalante is eventually able to create an atmosphere of pedagogical sensitivity concerning his students. Escalante comes to actively care for who his students are at the moment that he encounters them, and simultaneously he also cares for who his students are becoming.

As well, other qualities become evident by film's end with respect to Escalante's pedagogical qualities. Escalante's pedagogical intent for his students becomes conditioned by his love, care, and sense of responsibility for his students. He is there for his students when they call upon him. Escalante himself learn when to actively stand up for his students; he learns when to actively stand down for his students. Escalante's actions show he is attentive to the call to embrace his responsibility for his students. And Escalante is able to establish an influential environment whereby his pedagogical authority is reinforced by his students. This student-given authority, in turn, requires a pedagogically sensitive teacher to direct his or her students toward greater self-responsibility. It becomes obvious that the educative relation depicted in this film involves a two-way intentionality.

Also evident in the film's narrative tensions are cinematographic examples of several qualities a pedagogically fit teacher embodies. Escalante has a strong sense of vocation. He is passionate about his discipline, and demonstrates an interpretive intelligence. He uses a tactful sense of humor and has improvisational resoluteness. Escalante lives both inside and outside the classroom with a sense of pedagogic vitality. As well he has the moral fibre to stand up for his students. All of these qualities are lived by

Escalante as he exudes a certain understanding of the world. A mind-body synchronicity evolves featuring Escalante's pedagogical fitness qualities.

Despite some early resistance by some students, eventually most of Escalante's students seem to intuitively realize what Escalante is trying to do. They realize that Escalante is attempting something unlike anything else any other teacher had attempted in their educational lives. Escalante's students realize that Escalante is attempting to, and for the most part succeeding in, understanding their subjectivity. They see enough of this attempt to trust Escalante's intentions, and they go on to authorize the establishment of a pedagogic relation between themselves and Escalante. The subsequent relation, that is evident at film's end, is personal, unique, and two-way intentional. We see Escalante is moved to stand up for his students; they are moved to stand by him.

Still the vulnerability of these Latino students becomes very evident when they commit themselves to Escalante. This sense of vulnerability brings Escalante's intentions for his students, as well as his sense of responsibility for the students, into the foreground. This is an important sight in *Stand and Deliver* because many adults, with busy lives of their own, sometimes forget about a child-student's sense of vulnerability. And with an adult-teacher's possible forgetfulness, combined with a child-student's ability to forgive, there is even a more important need for a teacher to be engaged in an educative relationship founded upon the constant questioning of his or her personal self and professional practice. If an educative relationship is pedagogic in thought and action the questioning is ever-present. Pedagogically sensitive teachers ask: am I doing the right thing for and with my students? This pivotal question turns Escalante's initial rather authoritarian discipline driven relationship with his students into a pedagogical relation between a teacher, student, and subject matter at hand. We see the evolution in Escalante's understanding of who he is as a teacher begin as a questioning of self and others when Escalante sits on his bed pondering his future. With his wife's tactful counsel, Escalante is brought to face this question: why do I want to be a teacher?

From the interruptions in Reading One I have come to wonder: are the questions that bring Escalante to the realization that he must be attentive and responsive to his students' pedagogical needs, as opposed to his taking directions from his own authoritative desires, influenced by a change in Escalante's understanding of his own subjectivity as well as an increasing awareness of the subjectivity of his students?

Emergent, then, from the initial reading of *Stand and Deliver* is the film's depictions of several ways of understanding educational situations. Each way of understanding claims to have the best interests of the students in mind and at heart. We see these various ways of understanding manifested in the actions and non-actions of the school's administrators, the student's parents, and the ETS officials. Despite wanting what is best for her daughter Claudia's mother says she should not be too smart because boys don't like that in a woman. Ana's father, in protecting his daughter, suggests she stay in the restaurant so she doesn't get pregnant. There is Molina's way of understanding educative relations that is largely rooted in political expediency. His school is about to lose its accreditation. Ortega believes that any challenge to the students' status quo will destroy their fragile sense of self. There is also the understanding of students and education exhibited by the ETS officials. In the students' best interest they should confess to their mathematical crimes and then they might be able to enjoy the rest of their summer. In all of these discourses the results don't add up and, therefore, the students are guilty of something until they prove themselves otherwise. And yet each of these groups claim their understanding of students flows from an honest desire for the students to do well, to be successful, and to be happy in life. We see that despite this rhetoric these same people are absent in any hopeful way when the students really need them. The students are left alone to face the accusatory world. They are abandoned. Only Escalante comes and stands with the students against the antipathy. And he only does so after Fabiola focuses his sense of doubting and questioning in such a way that Escalante sees that he has no choice but to respond. That his response is pedagogic is a source for for this readings' reflection.

Escalante develops a sense of who his students are, and who they might become. This pedagogic sense flows directly from his understanding of their subjectivity as well as his own. Escalante comes to protect his students from the hatefulness, indifference, and pain of the accusatory world because he is, after his wife's pedagogical sympathetic listening and seeing, able to know and understand in an attuned manner that his students are subjective beings. He sees them, listens to them, and understands them by being open to their inner lifeworld to the best of his abilities. When he sees and understands their vulnerability, fear, and loss of hope Escalante has but one course of action. Escalante stands up for his students and delivers them from the threat. This theme of sensitivity, via pedagogical listening and seeing, offers a useful opportunity to explore the question of subjectivity and its influential role in the pedagogical relation between a teacher, his or her students, and the discipline that brings them together.

READING TWO: *Stand and Deliver* as a multi-interpreted text

> There is something in Escalante's frequent explanations of absolute value that casts light on what happened at Garfield. X inside two vertical lines, /x/, means absolute value of x, a quantity that may be either negative or positive. ... The value within is more important than its positive or negative sign, just as a large failure can turn out to be an enormous success. Sometimes in mathematics, as in life, negative and positive are just different directions toward the same goal. (Jay Mathews.)

This reading offers a summary of voices from two sources. The first source features cinematographic reviews of *Stand and Deliver.* While most of these reviews tend to focus on cinematographic quality or commercial entertainment value, several reviewers are drawn to offer comments specifically about the educative relation so central to the film's narrative. The second source is Mathews' (1988) text, *Escalante: The Best Teacher in America.* While most of the text explores Escalante's life story, there are significant anecdotal comments regarding his teaching philosophies and practices circa 1980-1988. Reading Two of *Stand and Deliver* uses these two sources in attempt to flesh out some themes that may offer openings to further explore the meaning and significance of the educative relation as presented in the film.

Most of the reviewers of *Stand and Deliver*, such as Corliss (1988), O'Brien (1988) and Siskel (1988), agree that the film is a significant improvement to the cinematographic images of teacher-student educative relations as presently depicted in the cinema. Gone, at least for the moment, are the caricature stereotypes of teachers and students as found in numerous "teenpix" films such as *Breakfast Club*, *Fast Times at Ridgemont High*, *Porky's*, *High School*, *Summer School*, and *Teachers*. In contrast, and for the most part, both Escalante and his students are presented in a strong, real, and positive way. And the film's plot attempts to realistically document a teacher's struggle, against significant odds, to inspire, help, and guide his students.

> It's all based on the true story of a teacher named Jaime Escalante, and some of his methods may be familiar--using everyday examples rather than textbook talk to interest and invigorate the reluctant students. The result is sort of educational equivalent of *Hoosiers*. This time we cheer for academic achievement, a rare event in the movies. We all know what a difference an individual can make in a person's life. *Stand and Deliver* portrays this powerful influence in a most entertaining manner. ... *Stand and Deliver* ***1/2. (Siskel, 1988)

Siskel's (1988) suggestion that teacher influence is a central theme in *Stand and Deliver* is shared by several of his colleagues. However, other critics such as Ulstein (1988) believe there is another theme evident in the film.

> Certainly competence can be achieved when a faithful teacher uses time-honored practices of pedagogy. But when a visionary transcends the rules and elevates teaching from technique to art, great teaching occurs. Such teachers yank students off the educational assembly line and launch them on the Quest.
>
> Great teachers take chances and dare their students to succeed. Great teachers are often impatient; sometimes they are abrasive. Great teachers rock the boat, and because they do they are not always welcome.
>
> Such tensions provide the basis for *Stand and Deliver* ... Most students will rise to the expectations held before them. Kids constantly confronted with the basics--times tables, verb conjugations, statistics such as the chief producers of Peru--will rise only enough to meet those expectations. ... Great teaching is more than calculus, physics, and English. It is about life. Thus, the secret of great teaching ... hinges on raising student expectations and launching them on a Quest. (Ulstein, 1988, p. 25)

A great teacher, according to Ulstein, is a visionary who, although grounded in the time-honored practices of pedagogy, is also capable of elevating the science of his practice into an art form. Through such a teacher's own infectious sense of vocation, love of teaching discipline, and a thoughtful interpretative intelligence about the power of expectations, there exists the possibility that his or her students may be brought face to face with the educational joy of accepting the challenge of a quest suited to their desires, skills, and gifts.

Kroll (1988), like Ulstein, suggests a similar theme: great teachers have the pedagogic ability to instill the profound excitement of learning in their students. If this excitement is evident, then tremendous learning is not only possible but probable. Kroll (1988) points to the films' showings of Escalante's students meeting the challenges presented by a demanding, skilled, and visionary teacher. Escalante is a teacher who refuses to allow his students to succumb to the inertias of a bureaucratic educational system or a societal racial stereotype. Confronting both the inertia of a deadening educational system and a hegemonic cultural racism, Escalante rekindles the joy of learning for his students by offering a pragmatic means of achieving a better life.

The critics mentioned so far honor the cinematographic depictions of Escalante's teaching attitude and skills as strong evidence that somewhere in America there are still a few good teachers doing incredible things with disadvantaged students. But in the excitement to celebrate Escalante's successes these critics do not really question exactly what it is that authorizes Escalante's public successes. However, other critics do raise questions regarding the film's portrayal of Escalante's students and the kind of relationship cinematographically depicted between Escalante and his students. For example, Milne (1988) suggests that the film is poverty-stricken in its presentation of the students as real Latino adolescents. Milne (1988) argues that it is difficult to make any significant comments about the relationship between Escalante and his students, because everything of interest regarding that relationship seems to happen outside the boundaries of the film's screen.

> The audience of *Stand and Deliver* is spared the trauma not only of watching Escalante's students come to terms with calculus but of watching their transformation from hooligans and daydreamers into a worshipful cadre that hangs

> on his every word. ... No doubt, if we could see the first draft of Musca and Menendez's screenplay, or perhaps even the rough-cut of the film, we would learn more about life in Jaime Escalante's classroom than we do from the 103 minute film on which Warner Bros. and its market analysis people have conferred their approval. No doubt, too, we would know something about how Escalante came to be the man he is, and what might happen if other teachers tried to replicate his achievements. The film leaps over, or circles around, a host of questions, and when the time comes for a climax it hones in on a confrontation with the Educational Testing Service--an enemy that, however deserving of our contempt, is peripheral to the story. ... Like so many American movies of late, *Stand and Deliver* winds up being about grit and determination and victory. It aims to leave us feeling all warm inside, albeit unburdened by any fresh knowledge or insight, lest, in the quest of these objectives, it commits the high crime of taxing some part of the audience's patience. It should really have been called Stand Up and Cheer. ... What it lacks is the quality that would truly have put Hollywood to shame: the sort of trust in its audience that Escalante has in his. (Lardner, 1988)

Milne (1988) and Larder (1988) are correct that many interesting elements of Escalante's relationship with his students are excluded from the filmic story as told on the screen. But it is also interesting to note that even in these criticisms about what has been editorially excluded in terms of Escalante's relationship with his students, the critics in question must have seen enough, sensed enough, and have inferred enough to have hit upon a significant theme presented in the film. And that theme is: a good, strong, and oriented educative relation between a teacher and his or her students is based upon trust. Even in the cinematographically selective representations of Escalante's classroom, in the cameo portraits of the students' lives, in the fleeting glimpses of Escalante's family life, and in the framing of the educative teacher-student relation as depicted, it is still evident that Escalante and his students have an educative relationship that is personal, special, two-way intentional and evident in expressions of mutual trust. Milne (1988) and Lardner (1988) may have seen more hidden pedagogy at work than they realized.

Finally, with respect to reviews of *Stand and Deliver*, the *Los Angeles Times* education critic, Woo (1988) offers these observations of Escalante's intentions, influences, and practices.

> Those who have observed Escalante disagree over whether the kind of talent he displays can be taught to other teachers or is a gift one is born with. The best teachers, experts say, have charisma, love the subject they teach, and are masters of the science and art of teaching. One can be charismatic and not be a good teacher, or one can be a fine teacher but less of a showman. ... what distinguishes Escalante is

> "a level of communication." What Jaime says to his students is, "What I have to say is important for you, not for me. What you do with the information I share with you will help you make something valuable of your life."
> His lessons are laced with basketball metaphors--a perfect parabola, for instance, is like a sky hook by Kareem Abdul-Jabbar. Explanations are often followed by gentle repetitions of "Got it? Got it?" to individual students. He often totes a small red velvet pillow around the classroom to deliver a playful sock to students who are not paying attention or who give an incorrect answer. His classroom is decorated with motivational messages, some of which are conveyed in sly ways. For example, he often turns the stereo way up in his office (a favorite song is "We are the Champions" by Queen), which draws students' attention to the signs hiding the loud speakers. The signs read, "I'll Be a Success." (Woo, 1988)

Woo (1988) actively supports the contention that there are certain situational atmospheric conditions, as well as several teacher qualities, which are necessary to increase the possibility of establishing a good, strong, and a pedagogically productive relation between a teacher, his or her students, and the subject matter at hand. Woo (1988) suggests a key theme that emerges from the film *Stand and Deliver* is: a pedagogically sensitive teacher is deeply aware of and responsive to the subjectivity of his or her students.

Turning to Mathews' text on Escalante's personal and professional life history, there are several text sections suggesting Escalante's classroom practices were akin to "a pedagogical Disneyland." Escalante's classroom is filled with posters, gadgets, and apparatus geared to focus student attention on the exploration of mathematics. The room is dominated by a huge sign Escalante places beside a clock. The sign features this formula: Determination + Discipline + Hard Work = The Way To Success. Another poster over the blackboard extolls his watchword, ganas. Ganas is a Spanish word that is loosely translated as "the urge." Escalante connotatively links the word to the desire to succeed, achieve, and grow. Within this classroom atmosphere, Escalante creates a space to apply his teaching intentions, attitudes, and methods.

> Escalante (a self-proclaimed specialist in desire and success) never settled on one method. He improvised, using different devices with different students, but ... careful observers discerned a basic philosophical approach.
> Social commentators and columnists sometimes speak of personal contact and warmth as characteristics of Latinos, as if no other ethnic community possessed such traits. In fact, Garfield students shared with all American teenagers the compulsive need to belong--thus the power of all gangs and the church and the extraordinary popularity of activities like the band and drill teams....

> Escalante came to appreciate the force of togetherness and the power of suggestion among his students.... Most received some kind of illustrative alias, since he still could not remember real names. There were usually one or two Elizabeth Taylors and, later, a few Madonnas. ... His students accepted their names, no matter how embarrassing, as a sign that he recognized and cared about them, a crucial first step. ... Next came the inevitable guilt trip ... why were they not doing their homework? He could lay this on in several ways--a friendly word, a sudden coldness of intonation, an injured expression, or in some cases a request for the student's textbook, the equivalent of stripping a corrupt patrolman of his badge and gun. Some of his critics saw this as bald, insensitive coercion, but his students almost always felt his warmth and concern, and understood the message.
>
> He joked constantly about the threat of an "F-U-U," the report card triple whammy of a failing academic grade plus unsatisfactory marks in work habits and cooperation. His students laughed, but the humor also served as a reminder that their lovable bulldog had teeth.
>
> Early in the term he called the parents of each of his newcomers. The students always heard about these calls. They were a tacit threat that he would call again if they caused trouble.
>
> He experimented with classroom routine. Sometimes he would become so unpredictable that the most orderly students would request a transfer ....
>
> Time was his tool, his melody. He welcomed--and sometimes ordered--students in for hours of after-school study to steal time from television and parental chores and talking on the telephone and band practice. ...
>
> What worked best, in the minds of students who thought about it years later, was simply hard work. ... Inside most American teenagers, including those at Garfield, lurks a visceral respect for honest labor. The feeling transcends class and ethnic background. They might give in to sloth and diversion themselves, but it was more difficult to do so when dealing with a teacher who worked as hard as Escalante did, no matter what they thought about his accent or wardrobe. "I'm not going to class because I want to," a struggling calculus student, Delia Mora, announced to a group of friends in 1983. "But when you see all the effort he puts into the class, you begin to want to put out just as much."
>
> Eventually he developed an Escalantese, a multilingual collage of sports, television news, high school patois, and soap opera vocabulary.[36] To an outsider, it was just as incomprehensible as a Caltech text on relativity, but it made sense to Escalante's students. Its odd twists of meaning helped them remember, and its obscurity gave

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[36] Mathews (1988, pp. 307-309) provides a complete glossary of "Escalantese." Some of Escalante's classroom terms are:

Doghouse: Synthetic division.
Face mask: A mistake at the problem's beginning.
Gravy: Simple substitution.
Green light: Easy factoring.
In love: Factoring by grouping.
Marching band: A simple solution following unusual procedures.
Red light: Difficult factoring, stop and study.
Burro: A stupid student, used in a humorous way.
Hyatola: A student who comes into the classroom and just sits.
Johnny: Any student whose name or nickname Escalante cannot remember.
Rajneesh: A student who wants to get an A in the class without doing anything.
Intensive care: When a student is failing test after test, he or she must see Escalante after school every day until the improvement shows.
Quarantine: When a student has poor attendance and does not do the required work, he or she must stay after school.

them the special feeling of being part of a secret society--a gang without graffiti or violence (Mathews, 1988, pp. 192-193, 196).

Many of Escalante's teaching methods depicted in the film are also highlighted by Mathews. With respect to Escalante's "stand and deliver" method, Mathews (1988) writes

> Absolute value would be vital to understanding calculus. They had to get it down now. He had glossed over some mathematical niceties, but it was important first to help his audience find the theater before he directed them into their seats.
>
> The next day he closed the classroom before the period began and kept everyone outside.
>
> "Line up! Line up!" he commanded the puzzled throng. He stood in the doorway and confronted the first boy. "Absolute value of x greater than a," he said.
>
> "What about it?" the boy replied.
>
> "Okay, you stay out there for ten minutes. Maybe you read your book, you remember what we talk about."
>
> "Hey, man, you didn't say you gonna..."
>
> Escalante snapped his large, thick fingers. "I don't care. Next?" He eyed a tall girl. "Absolute value of x greater than a."
>
> "Uh, ... oh, ... well, ... oh God."
>
> "Where your book? Ten minutes."
>
> "Next? Absolute value of x greater than a."
>
> "Three-second violation?"
>
> "Nah, that's to help you remember, but you gotta give me the solution. Next?"
>
> When the end of the line began to profit from intelligence relayed from the front, he switched to numbers. "Absolute value of x equal to four. No? Next!"
>
> After twenty minutes he has only three who could not produce a satisfactory answer. He sat them in front of the room. "Look, I want you to sit close to the door, 'cause you're gonna fly. You're just going to have to sit there today, then you're gonna have to go to another school because the situation is, you walk into Garfield, but Garfield hasn't gotten into you."
>
> He tried them again the next day, with better results. Then, riding on this sense of accomplishment, he announced a quiz on everything they had learned in the first four weeks. "If you have any questions come after three o'clock." Many came, convinced that he meant business. (Mathews, 1988, pp. 119-120)

Finally, as a summary of what might be learned from Escalante's educative relations with his students, Mathews (1988) writes

> Few human enterprises ... have endured as many bewildering changes over the last three decades as American education. The *Sputnik* challenge, new math, open classrooms, relevancy, computer education, back to the basics, and critical thinking have ridden in on attractive waves of publicity, often followed by awkward silence when teachers discovered again the fragility of theory exposed to human nature. The unexpected and unprecedented success of Garfield High School grew out of the personal beliefs and ambitions of one man, with help from a handful of men and woman who shared some, but not all, of his views. ... There are four lessons garnered from the Escalante-Garfield experience:
>
> The first lesson of Garfield is: Teachers who bring students up to high standards are precious commodities. Leave them alone. .... If good teachers ask for help, give it to them, but only the way they want it.

> The second lesson is: If left alone, teachers who work hard and care for their students will produce better results than ten times their number dutifully following the ten best recommendations of the ten latest presidential commissions on education.
> A third lesson seems to apply just to minorities, but it ought to work with nearly all human children: Demand more than they think they have to give. Spend every available moment convincing them they can do it if they simply make an effort. ...
> A teacher who makes demands is always under assault, friendly or otherwise. Single-mindedness, one of Escalante's more obvious traits, is essential.
> But there is a subtler way to sustain the efforts, which might be lesson four: Pick some unusually difficult goal, such as Advanced Placement Examination, and organize students as a team to reach it.
> Peer pressure claims significant power on every high school campus in America. On some it leads students to compete for academic honors. It may produce spectacular football teams. Sometimes it works at cross-purposes, rewarding both academic effort and academic nonchalance.
> Garfield would not have come as far as it did if the calculus and AP programs had not infiltrated important student cliques and attained a critical mass of student interest. It became fashionable to be in calculus, in part through the dramatic events of 1982, and in part through the showmanship of Jaime Escalante. Popularity begot pride and productivity (Mathews, 1988, pp. 287, 288-290).

The critical reviews of *Stand and Deliver* and Mathew's texts have, for the most part, described some important pedagogical conditions and teacher qualities required for a strong and fruitful educative relation. However, the primary focus in both commentary sources is on Escalante as the successful teacher. Still in the desire to enshrine Escalante's considerable talents and successes two other elements of the pedagogical relation seem to become marginalized or backgrounded. Milne (1988) and Larder (1988) raise the question: where are the students in *Stand and Deliver* ever depicted as subjective beings? And add to that question this one: how is the subject matter at hand depicted in the film? Simply, even though the teacher is an important part of that which constitutes a pedagogical relation, there are very few good teachers without great relations with students willing and ready to explore the subject matter at hand.

Reviewing the reading:

Pedagogy is orientated (commitment) to students and to disciplines

This second reading of *Stand and Deliver*, which has relied on two sources, offers several points of departure regarding interpretations of the film. For example, Siskel (1988) advocates the power of teacher influence, Ulstein (1988) and Kroll (1988) advance the belief that teaching is both art and science guided by a teacher with a visionary quest and the ability to instill the joy of learning in his or her students, while Milne (1988) suggests that a good educative relationship is rooted in trust, and Woo (1988) concurs that the communication skills of a teacher must be as responsive as the teacher's awareness of the subjectivity of his or her students. Mathews also adds to the interpretive complexity by suggesting it is important to consider teacher influence in the form of intent and expectation, the power of peer influence, the impact of communities on teacher-student relationships, the readiness of the students, and the role of teacher as model when reflecting on what constitutes an educative relation.

We see in the reviews attention being paid to Escalante's vision for his students as well as praise for his teaching gift. He is able to create an atmosphere within which his students can strive to gain some control over their own self-making. For the most part the reviews of *Stand and Deliver* honor Escalante's vision, skills, and intentions as the film's primary focus.

The film's depiction of Escalante as a pedagogically fit teacher presumes his sense of vocation, his caring for students, a deep sense of responsibility, an active sense of hope in the face of ever-present crisis, an interpretive intelligence, a moral intuitiveness, and a moral fibre to stand up for his beliefs. These aspects of Escalante's teaching practice are pretty much evident in the film's narrative. But in the rush to honor the commercially powerful, and socially inspirational story of Escalante's successes some of the more pedagogically reflective reviews of *Stand and Deliver* question the poverty of the film's depictions of the students and, indeed, of mathematics itself.

And yet, there is a felt sense throughout the film that Escalante's sense of pedagogical understanding changes. Although the film does not really explicitly explore the transition or shift, choosing rather to follow a high profile conflict with the testing service, it seems possible to suggest that Escalante's transforming realization is brought on by ever-increasing questioning and doubting of his educative relationship with his students. Escalante's students become, to Escalante, subjective beings. In a pivotal scene between Escalante and his wife there is a glimpse of the ineffable, antinomic nature of pedagogy itself when to Escalante's questioning statement, "I cannot teach them any more" there is Fabiola's reflective, tactful, and yet mocking response, "You can teach them how to quit." With that exchange as seemingly simple as it is, there is the turn evident of a more pedagogically sensitive Escalante. Escalante begins to listen to and to see his students in a more generally trustful, sympathetic, and vulnerable way. Corresponding to his increasing pedagogical sensitivity with respect to his student's subjectivity, Escalante's actions are more sensitive and tactful. Flowing from Escalante's changing understanding of his subjective awareness of who he is as a Latino-American mathematics teacher, and what he is called upon to do with his students in the socioeconomic and political context they find themselves in, Escalante is able to begin to balance his deep passionate sense of discipline within an understanding of the world that includes guidance from the subjective lifeworld of those he teaches. Subjectivity, both the teacher's and his or her students', emerges as a significant theme in *Stand and Deliver*.

READING THREE: Exploring *Stand and Deliver* as a deconstructed text

1986 marked the 350th anniversary of Descartes authoring *Discours de la methode*. This anniversary date also serves as a high water mark for the linear ascendence of the hegemonic consciousness of the "thinking subject." The modern citizen, over the last 200 years and especially over the last 90 years, has aspired to achieve a singularly minded vision of human perfection. There is no discounting the results, products, and consequences of the modernist quest. They have been numerous, influential, and great. There is no turning back. But this ascendance to modernity has also been accompanied by the powerful paradigms of empiricism, positivism, behaviorism, psychologism, and a totalizing faith in techno-science. Indeed, modern consciousness has now become insulated within these accompanying "isms". Each "ism" ensures the modern thinking subject's self-appointed, self-perpetuating position of dominance in societal and cultural power structures and governing institutions.

Like most other Western institutions, the formal system of educating society's young honors the minded quest for individual and collective perfection. This quest is deemed achievable if the acquisition of required competencies is performatively demonstrable, behaviorally observable, and empirically accountable. In accord with such a vision for the institution of education, students are conceived of as standing reserves; they are incomplete and poverty-stricken in their rawness. Students, so seen, require systematic processing in order to function effectively and efficiently in a future-oriented, increasingly technologically-superior modern world.

Stand and Deliver as a realist artistic expression shows and tells the privileged modern educational story. On one level the film tells a story that honors a heroic, and larger than life, individual teacher's desire to inspire his students to overcome the tremendous socioeconomic and political odds stacked against them. The teacher's initial educative quest is to enlighten his students and better their lives. Mathematics is the means by which the students can achieve a privileged place in a world from which they have been unfairly excluded. In the starkness of this initial description of the modern world and its institution of schooling there is already a sense that there are other stories evident both in life and in the film that run counter to the dominant narrative.

Taking a lead from Reading One and Reading Two I suggest that exploring understandings of subjectivity, a teacher's as well as his or her students', could reveal something about the qualities of the pedagogical relationship. To explore understandings of modernist subjectivity as depicted in the film *Stand and Deliver*, I will attempt a pedagogically-sensitive deconstructed reading of the film.

The reading evolves like this. First, a featured tenet of the modern world, which the film privileges, is identified. For the purposes of this reading that tenet is the honoring of the positivistic framing of a thinking subject. In this regard the film provides many examples that indicate the initial educative relation between Escalante and his students is significantly modern in a positivistically influential way. The initial educative relationship depicted in the film is supported by an equally positivistic vision of modern mathematics, and a behavioral vision of human desire. Second, it becomes increasingly evident when exploring the film's narrative, which attempts to honor a selective vision of modern mathematics and human desire, that other influential stories, although not privileged stories, are also evident. The resulting tension between mathematics understood in a theoretical sense as opposed to mathematics understood in a lived sense, as well as desire understood as a minded expression and conversely understood as an embodied quality, make it possible for Escalante to reflect on his teaching relationship with his students. When he does so, Escalante comes to understand, on his part and on the part of his students, that subjectivity conditioned by a positivistic vision of the world is really an impediment to the kind of relation Escalante and his students really require of each other in order to be successful as Latinos, mathematicians, and human beings. In the later part of the film amid all the tension, conflict, and demands for accountability and responsibility regarding the students' competency, there is cinematographic evidence that a pedagogical relation between Escalante and his students has been developing. Finally, it is possible to suggest that in the film's attempt to legitimate its story of success, via academic achievement, it really provides the possibility to reflectively overturn the notion of a positivistically defined subjectivity. Indeed, the film offers the pedagogical possibility to learn something about how human beings might come together pedagogically in ways otherwise not honored by the modern thinking subject.

As the film begins, Escalante is a very modern man. He is a societally-sanctioned expert in mathematics, and a self-professed expert in desire (ganas). To his class Escalante proudly proclaims, "Math is the great equalizer," and "all I demand is ganas (desire)." These claims are in line with what the film narrative initially shows as a sanctioned version of what should constitute a "good education." The foundation of such an education features the competent acquisition of competitive world-class skills by students that are suitable to ensure they will secure a privileged place in the modern world. For Escalante the educational process of preparedness is reducible to a formula: Determination + Discipline + Hard Work = The way of success.

When Escalante is pictured at work with his students early in the film, what is the cinematographic understanding of mathematics (calculus) presented? Mathematics is shown not for what it is but for what it can do. Certifiable competency in calculus is postulated as the perfect systematic way to correct the wanting Latino students' lives. Mathematics is the great equalizer. Mathematics is so empowered because as Blum (1984) suggests, "mathematics exposes us to the need for self-governance in the form of our recognition that our pleasure in exercising our abilities will only be true when it is guided by some conception of the end which such exercises serves" (p. 256). That is, as human beings living at this time we know that although we attempt to balance our lives between passion and discipline, control and freedom, we also know experientially that the most privileged societal activities we engage in are structured in such a way that the answer is predictable if the rules are properly applied. In this sense much of modern life in general is a reflection of the mathematical proofs framed by Cartesian logic. The equational qualities of formalistic application ensures the possibility of equalizing nature's tendency to be contingent and discrepant. As such, personal and professional meaning-making for the thinking subject is rooted in a selective mathematical vision of life as quantifiable, and as empowered by selective symbolic numbers as the great equalizers; numbers are the great levellers. These aspects of modern mathematics applied to human existence also frame a teleological system of expectation such that we as moderns have a tendency to desire only one correct solution to each problem. In fact, having the right answer has become paramount because, in a structural sense, there can be but one possible answer to each problem.

With the possible certitude of positivism and empiricism comes applications of truth and justice. As a result the systematic economy of this figure-oriented honoring in the modern world, the number one dominates. The desire to be number one in the world today has reached incredible proportions. This desire is presently reflected in personal, professional, and cultural encounters, events, and relationships. Ironic is it not that mathematics as the great equalizer has evolved, via a means-ends blur, such that only one number becomes privileged above all others. In fact, to question the desire to be number one in every facet of Western human existence is now deemed irrational.

By using systematic internally defined protocols within rigorous formulas of check and counter-checks to ensure internal consistency, large bodies of numbers may be surveyed and procedurally rendered into the average one. The result is a tendency in the Western world to seek democracy by survey, consensus by opinion poll, agreement by computer projection, selection by consumer demand, and decision-making by referential sampling. Plus or minus to decimal points of accuracy, the accusatory number describes in terms of inclusion-exclusion what we think, feel, and do as often as it prescribes what we should think, feel, and do. The point simply is that in a positivistic, empirically-oriented world modern mathematics is very influential.

Yet, the privileged number, as a statistically generated entity, that rules as the basis for applications of the equalizing treatment of unequal others is really nonexistent. There is no lifeworld correspondence to the procedurally-treated, mathematically-refined, idealized number. The numbers we assume to live by are an idealized hypothetical rendering.

Mathematically sound in every way these numbers are essentially appropriated and exploited by dominant societal forces to ensure equalized difference. Sanctioned numbers take on power. They serve as a yardstick, or a measure, for many other numbers. Such is the power of the desirable number one. In that number's privileged status the other numbers are out. The tension in the statement, "mathematics is the great equalizer" is brought to face itself in the very unequal treatment of the ganas students by the guardians of the numbers that really count, the Educational Testing Service (ETS).

This form of empiricism and positivism is part of what constitutes the modern world and its use of modern mathematics. It is in this world that Escalante begins. Correspondingly, the film also provides a modern representation of human desire as positivistically defined. When Escalante is pictured at work with his students early in the film what is the cinematographic understanding of desire (ganas) presented? If desire is the longing to possess something, then in *Stand and Deliver* that something to be possessed is manifest as an external object of desire. The object of desire, in this case, is calculus. It is test competence in calculus, as verified by the ultimate sanctioning institution like the ETS, that can eradicate the social inertia and societal stereotyping oppressing Escalante's Latino students. Desire, in this sense, involves a complex interplay of something internal and for something external. The object out there can complete the students' lives, but success cannot be acquired unless the internal poverty such as the lack of skills and self-confidence as named by Ortega, or the lack of opportunity as named by Molina, or the lack of willingness as named by Coach, is remedied. Only when the students are motivated into attaining a condition of willingness, whereby they will do what is needed to succeed, may the object desired be obtained. Escalante's initial promise to his students is that he knows, being an expert in desire, how to inspire them to become successful mathematicians. The dominant culture, which honors mathematical competence, will embrace the mathematically tested students as desirable citizens. The students will become objects of desire for a society that enshrines binary thinkers.

The film also seeks to intensify the dichotomous struggle between the internal desire, as the will to succeed, and the external object of desire which could satisfy the hunger. The contrast is made cinematographically evident through selective snap-shot framing of the personal lives of the students. The underprivileged socioeconomic, political, and racial environment the students must function in requires them to supply great demonstrations of both internal desire, as will power, and external competence with the object of desire, calculus. This demand for increased performativity is required by the dominant culture in order to see the overcoming of the students' stereotypically presented cultural inadequacies.

The ganas students must overcome the images of being hedonistically body conscious; a Western cultural stereotype often associated with Latino Americans. By living as if attentive to the darker bodily functions, for example there is Claudia's vampiness, Pancho's lust, Ana's virginity, Chuco's violence, Tito's rock music, Lupe's fertility, and Angel's temper, the students are initially portrayed as being dominated by their bodies. In a mind privileged world those who are subject to uncontrollable bodily wants, or who are defined by an undesirable body image, are often portrayed by the society at large as having somewhat limited intellectual abilities.

When the students are first presented in the film they are portrayed as being trapped in their bodies. The first request they make of Escalante is to talk about sex. Escalante's first attempt to win them over begins with the whispered suggestion that intelligent people make better lovers. The student's rebellion against Escalante's "gestapo" teaching methods is abortive because it is conceived on a whim, and although passionate in intent, is not well thought through. Then after the students initial confrontation with the ETS they lapse back into their bawdy ways. And running counter to these images the film presents the images of civilized citizens who are minded people able to control their bodies.

As the film moves to document how Escalante could possibly overcome the poverty-stricken level of existence in his students, he cites his own story. It is also a story of simple, poverty-stricken beginnings. But it becomes a story of a striving to become a teacher. In a very positive way it is this story of individual achievement that parallels humankind's story of overcoming tremendous threats to its survival. Still the simple modern success story is often more complex to live than it is to tell. In the Western world understandings of desire as an internal willingness facilitating the attainment of an external object to ensure one's completion actually forms a compensatory vision of life. In this regard, the modern citizen is always lacking something. Even the most successful modern citizen is left with a sense of wanting. Escalante had risen from a menial existence as an immigrant dish-washer to the position of being a successful computer programmer. Still he did not feel complete. He desired to become a teacher. In this desire to move on, to strive to be better, Escalante is not alone.

It is increasingly evident the modern journey, framed positivistically, for the thinking subject has been reduced to a contest to capture ever-changing consumptive challenges. When a challenge is achieved the pleasure is significant, but only seems to last as long as the trophy is being consumed. The hunger of being incomplete returns very quickly. With individual after individual living life accordingly and with most moderns striving to satisfy the need (desire) for self-awareness as a means to achieve power and control, significant expressions of nihilism and hedonism have emerged in the modern world. Driven by the assumption that the thinking subject can manage every facet of every situation encountered, a reflective question is: what is really consumed in the desire to control everything? Perhaps Escalante's "burn-in (out)" may be more insightful than a slip of the tongue might suggest.

Stand and Deliver begins to move forward telling a story of a selected image of the thinking subject. The story supported by a positivistic vision of mathematics and a behavioral vision of desire, shows a great deal about modern subjectivity as having become coopted into expressions of hedonism and nihilism. Certainly modern positivistically-defined subjectivity was aided when Descartes' influential work suggested that thinking must radically withdraw from a transcendent position based upon a dialectic of nature, or a dialectic of Spirit, to a new principle of ground entrenched in a dialectic of self-consciousness. This dialectic of self-consciousness became framed by a conceptually specific mathematical system Descartes initially imagined as a means of framing a positivistic science of measuring, ordering, and enumerating. But this dialectic also became a foundation upon which most of the modern world's societal discourses of power have become based. As Descartes' vision took on universal proportions, and as it became inculcated and co-opted by the Enlightenment grand narratives, there were increasing attempts by societal institutions to reduce life's complexity to structural grounding, figural principles, and hypothetical constructs.

> The major characteristic of the Cartesian theory of representation is that, by forcing and framing the world into a particular order, the world is reduced to an object that has the character of a picture. Heidegger recognizes this transformation as the essential characteristic of the modern age. He observes: "The world picture does not change from an earlier medieval one into a modern one, but rather the fact that the world becomes a picture at all is what distinguishes the essence of the modern age." But this picture is not just an ordinary picture. Rather, it signifies the possibility of apprehending and grasping the world as a pictorial schema. ... in Descartes' work representation takes on a new meaning. It ceases to function as a convention and acquires the objective character of truth as certitude based on the extension of epistemological principals to the rest of philosophy. In addition to its objective character, representation implies a new agency, the subject that governs its order axiomatically. In other words, representation now becomes pragmatic of the new set of relations between Cartesian subjectivity and the world. (Judovitz, 1988, p. 189)

With Descartes' minded mathematical postulations used to reduce the world to a thinkable, manageable schematic of a projected prototype, representations of life easily become based upon a model of what things should ideally look like. Representation, so understood, quickly becomes prescriptive. In turn, prescription takes on an authority of its own because it appeals to a verification and legitimation process linked to a transcendent position of absolute objectivity. Within this positivistic modern picture frame, the Cartesian subject becomes defined by a purely formal geometric position within the system of representation. Moderns have learned to accept as natural and, therefore, think they are at home with the split between Self as subject and World as object. The modern positivistically-defined citizen best serves his or her world by perpetuating the split. By being a technician devoid of feelings, impulses, or desires, the role of being human is not unlike the axiomatic subject of geometric proofs that circumscribes the sphere of all that can be represented through a selective subjectivity. Modern positivistic subjectivity, then, is represented as a presence that projects an objective personality, a calculating intentionality, and a self-determined individuality. It becomes one's responsibility to act accordingly. Anyone acting in other ways is irresponsible.

Within this modern subjectivity, Judovitz (1988) makes the point that will (desire) emerges as perhaps the most powerful signifier of what it means to be modern.

> Will does not mean a particular attribute of the subject or a faculty, but rather the ability of the subject to further "perfect" its already perfect, that is, mathematically certain essence. The notion of will is not supplementary to subjectivity. Rather, will is its true expression in so far as it qualifies man's redefined relations to both God and the world. (Judovitz, 1988, p. 192)

So the modern positivistic notion of subjectivity, which is rooted in Cartesian mathematics, pictures the human entity, presented through the presence of representation, as a minded existence legislating its own relation to itself through the quest for one verifiable truth. Modern subjectivity honors performances that appear to be disciplined, based upon hard work, and objectively named as a desire. Such a performativity is the means for affirming humankind's priority to itself through the capacity to propose and secure its own self-definition through a potentially ever-expansive perfectibility.

Having made the case that there is an epistemological arrangement, perhaps unconsciously understood by moderns, that pervasively underwrites the Western consciousness and its privileging of highly technical scientific traditions, as based upon Cartesian science, there is subsequently little thought or little concern given by moderns to privileging selected divisions of the world into strict binary oppositions. As a modern realist film *Stand and Deliver* reflectively seeks to honor the same poles of the binary oppositions honored by modernity. But even the most selectively modern film also carries with it a subversive feature. Films often reveal more than they consciously frame. And today it is also evident that most films reflect the modern-postmodern tension evident in the present world condition. This tension is cinematographically noticeable when elements of the dominant film story, in effect, turn back on that story. It is this turning, or flipping, to which I now focus my attention.

There are many tensions between polarities evident in *Stand and Deliver*. Most of these tensions are consciously and cinematographically constructed in order to move the film forward. That is, a film needs suspense at the proper scripted moments to ensure the required story is both highlighted, and yet might seem in doubt. Normally as the cinematographic story unfolds the tensions depicted are framed as either-or dualities. In *Stand and Deliver* there are tensions evident between success versus failure, hope versus rejection, the mental versus the manual, love versus hate, enlightenment versus ignorance, and so on. But also evident in the film's narrative are other less consciously staged tensions. Ironically it is these other stories that are required to support the film's dominant narrative.

This reading does not attempt to explore all the other stories pushed aside in the film's desire to tell the story of Escalante's success. But it is worth wondering what some of those stories could be by reflectively asking: who are these students really? Who are they at home? What are their families like? What happens to them after Escalante? What are other members of their community like? Where are the other students in Garfield? Where are the other teachers? What is Ortega's story? How did she become a woman who, for all the "right" reasons, seems to have given up hope for children? What is Molina's story? How did he end up with Garfield and Garfield with him? What about Escalante's family? What of the relationship between Fabiola and Escalante? What are Escalante's children like and what is the nature of his absent relationship with them?

Also there are other tensions and contradictions in the film that are set up as oppositional. There are images of water--concrete rivers and the inviting ocean. There are images of cars--those abandoned in the street, and Escalante's original car and its new and "improved" counter-part, Pancho's constantly broken-down car, or Chuco's cruising machine. Is there a reason the ETS investigators are a Latino and a Black? How do the sounds and images of East L.A. influence the film? Is that powerful wall mural Escalante initially drives by indicative of the state of affairs in the community? Is Garfield High School an icon for America's inner city schools? Why is a Bulldog the school mascot in a predominantly Latino community? How influential is the music in the film to set atmosphere? Yet, despite the plotted and scripted tension of the dominant story and its more or less supportive marginal images and stories, there are never really any significant challenges, any deep questioning, of the dichotomies presented as anything other than simply either-or choices. In a similar vein there is a scripted lack of tension in the film's honoring of the authoritative power of individual rights, modern mathematics, and desire as the means to achieve success.

All of these other stories not highlighted but necessary to the film's selected story of under-privileged students' desire to succeed, become reflectively noticeable when there is the realization that a film honoring desire actually frames a lack of desire to even consider any deeper questioning of both the film's content and intent. In fact the film emphatically confirms that it is "Based on a true story." Instantly there is the claim that the film has an objective, grounded quality. *Stand and Deliver* seeks to deliver like a scientific portrait of the "facts." The sanctioned story is to be documentary-like. This stressing of a nonfictional quality pushes aside any suggestion of the film being fictionalized. To support its way of telling the story the film concludes with a roll of self-important numbers verifying Escalante's success against the enemy, the Educational Testing Service.

This quest for a nonfictional quality to the film also seems supported by the film's signature, *Stand and Deliver*. Mathews has outlined the "stand and deliver" method so familiar to Escalante's classes. This method of instruction almost takes on the structure of a military-like relation. In a military context lines are important. Upon approaching "the line" as that initial position protecting the inner encampment, a sanctioned representative of the inner group, who possesses a secret password, makes the demand: "Halt. Who goes? Stand and deliver!" The outsider stands, is visible, and delivers without deception, in the proper coded language, the word that counts. Only one response is acceptable. There is no room for error in this relationship; it is the relationship of life or death.

But there may be another way to read the title *Stand and Deliver*, just as there might be another way to read the film's depiction of modern subjectivity. Perhaps the title names another way of being with students. Certainly Mathews has described, technically, Escalante's stand and deliver method. But in the film we actually see the way Escalante uses the method. We see then, perhaps pedagogically, that the title names two other aspects of Escalante's way of being with students. First, it names a certain improvisational quality in Escalante's teaching. This quality is akin to that needed by stand-up comedians. Most successful comedians are continually calling upon their training, experience, and intelligence, as well as an intuitive comedic giftedness, all of which enables them to stand and deliver, often at a moment's notice. Certainly it is rare that comedians do not have some form of routine. Even improvisation is often loosely scripted and certainly experientially guided. Nevertheless, Escalante's improvisational talents seem to enable him to transcend the usual comedic relationship of a comedian to the audience as one of a means to an end; the end being, of course, a successful performance for the comedian. Good teachers and good pedagogy exhibits both improvisational and scripted qualities. And although a comedic performance is not the definitive way to define what it means to be pedagogic, in this film humor creates the necessary condition of a space for a pedagogic relationship to grow. The second quality of the title names Escalante's seemingly paradoxical ability to stand up to his students, and yet to stand up for his students. Pedagogically, a teacher must stand with and, on occasion, against his students. What is pedagogic about this kind of standing is knowing when to deliver and when not to.

It is Escalante's sense of humor and his students' use of humor as well as an awareness of the vital spirit of the human body, that ultimately turns the film back on itself and offers another reading of the notion of subjectivity. This flipping also opens a space in the film to see how pedagogy grows and works, and also offers a moment citeable by the film's viewers of a site from which to pedagogically debate what actually happened. The film's deeper confrontation with the modern thinking subject occurs because of the space created by humor and an increasing awareness of the human body.

Like his initial desire to control his students, albeit for their own good, Escalante's humor often rides roughshod over the students. Initially, much of his humor is at the students' expense. The humor is rude, often crude, and distinctly aggressive. For example, Escalante says, "Hey net head," "Go take cosmetology class," "She's got more boyfriends than Elizabeth Taylor," "You should do some work from the neck up," "This is baby stuff for the Boy Scouts," "Tough guys don't do math they sell chicken for a living. Wing or leg man?" and so on. Escalante's confrontational style of verbal humor, which utilizes an accusatory, prescriptive, ordering language, seems to have very few elements of peaceful or tactful speech. But Escalante's humorous intentions change during the course of the film. He takes a much more tactful stance toward his students, albeit his humor can still be rough on occasion. This shift in the role of humor is related to Escalante's coming to understand the subjectivity of his students. The students become, in Escalante's eyes, distinctive subjective beings. They are no longer objectified items to be made into mathematical technicians, or to be made fun of.

This significant change flows from the following point. Whereas Escalante's initial use of humor is often intellectually assertive, and at times emotionally aggressive if not demeaning, it is the students' inherent understanding of body language literacy that provides the actual means by which they come to understand the real intentional meaning of Escalante's humor. It is ironic that it is this embodied "body literate" quality of the Latino street kids, which is dishonored by the film's dominant narrative, that becomes the means that enables Escalante to win his students over and truly lead them to success.

From the first encounter with Escalante, the students seem to sense and see that Escalante's own body often belies his intellectually aggressive language. As an older, overweight, balding, spectacled, and at times physically frail man, Escalante's physical state seems to ridicule his powerful, assertive verbal stance with unbridled contradictoriness. Escalante's body often makes fun of him as he makes fun of the physically virile body-consciousness of his students. Escalante's somatic presence, his embodied sense of tactfulness, frames him for what he is. Like his students, and beyond his dominating rhetoric, Escalante is as flawed, as contradictory, and as imperfect as they are. These are human qualities and they actually end up contributing to the strength of Escalante's pedagogical qualities. His weaknesses offer a strength, his own insecurities offer a sense of security, and his sense of being lost offers a hopefulness of finding a way.

Escalante's teaching also seems bound up in a strong use of mimesis, an active emotional identification with a speaker (or chorus). This mimic quality Escalante uses is pedagogical and it is also a very body-bound element. Escalante's stand and deliver style often takes on the appearance of a form of responsive poetry. His Escalantese, as an insider language, creates a special feeling of participation among his students. In an embodied sense the educative situation in Escalante's classroom takes on mimic-like and mime-like qualities. Escalante's students actually begin to act like Escalante. Their way of seeing the world, their sense of humor, and their level of confidence become much like Escalante's. Angel especially demonstrates these qualities. He continually shows the same improvisational wit and resolve Escalante possesses. Bringing his grandmother to Escalante's at Christmas as he can get back into class, or the con-job he pulls on the ETS investigators are powerful examples of how he has learned from Escalante as opposed to what he has learned from Escalante.

A second body feature that opens up a space for pedagogy to grow in the relationship between Escalante and his students, and that confronts modern subjectivity and its mind-body split is the question of the male-female duality presented in the film. In the tension between what it means to be a male or a female in the modern world, Escalante comes to experience an understanding of his own gendered subjectivity and an increasing awareness of the subjectivity of his students. The questions of gender and sexuality are a most telling tension in the film narrative, but are left unexplored by most of the reviews. Simply framed: men act and women appear. In the Western world a man's presence is significantly dependent upon the promise of his power. If the man's promise is credible, then the man's presence is enhanced. If the promise is shallow, then there is little acknowledged presence. This promise of possible power--physical, economic, sexual, intellectual and so on--is usually objectified as something externally obtainable. Accordingly the man's presence is defined by his actions or non-actions toward the sanctioned object of desire. Even if the man's actions are deflected they are still valued as long as they are acknowledged as attempts to obtain the external object. But if the object is secured, even in part or via some token substitute, it can still be used to exert power over others less privileged. What, then, is the promise Escalante possesses? What power does he exert? What is the promise to his students? And among the ganas students, does Angel not get more changes because of the potential he seems to embody?

In contrast, and dualistically so, a woman's presence is established not through action but rather through patriarchal attitudes toward her presence. Generally the male consciousness defines what can and cannot be done to women and by women. In *Stand and Deliver* what do Ortega, Lupe, Claudia, Fabiola, Rafaela, Ana, Claudia's mother, the female cop, Angel's grandmother do? Is it easier to ask: how do they appear? All these women seem defined by appearance. A distinctly male sense of vision dominates their existence and seems to determine most of the relations between men and woman in the film's narrative. At some point the modern woman has been turned into, or has turned herself into, an object; an object that is a sight to behold, as a site to be surveyed, and as something to be cited among other possessions. The more desirable the object's appearance the greater the male competition for possession. Witness the initial struggle for the school's most prized possession, Claudia. In a sense Escalante is among those competing. But there is an undercurrent present in the film that also draws attention to questions of the legitimacy of a gender relationship featuring an idealizing male spectator and the surveyed female.

Is it not Fabiola who comes through emotionally, intellectually, and tactfully to soothe, provoke, and eventually to offer a pedagogic sense of hope to Escalante as he sits dejected in their bedroom? Is it not Lupe who ultimately defines her future relationship with Pancho when he comes back to her? Is it not Claudia's embracing of Escalante, which although momentarily places her within the security he offers, also awakens in Escalante the understanding that she is not an object to be ridiculed and persuaded? Does Claudia not have a subjective existence just as Escalante does? If he did not feel her pain after he hurt her he would not have left his class to go after her to make contact in a different way. Is it not Angel's grandmother's weakness that shows a gentleness in the barrio tough? Is it not Escalante's standing up in defense of Ana's rights, while her father degrades his daughter's intelligence, passion for learning, and sexuality, that shows Escalante is beginning to understand that his responsibility to Ana is for Ana as a subjective human being and not as a substitute father-figure? Even Javier reaches a certain status when the former mouse roars like a lion coming to Ana's defense as the ETS officials question her. But is it not Ana's initial act of defiance by standing up to the ETS investigators and Molina that opens a space for Javier's actions?

Stand and Deliver as a filmic text both honors and also rattles the phallocentric grand story; a story that is one of the foundations of modernity. The dynamics of modern gender exploitation is rooted in a selective telling of history, a privileged power base, and a categorizing use of knowledge. Ironically, it is Escalante's questioning of his life as a teacher of students that offers a patriarchal gender lesson. Simply both Escalante and his students embody their subjectivity. To be a disembodied being and to live life as a minded existence only, is to be removed from the wonders of daily living. Conversely, to be forced to live within only a body existence level reduces life to an unimaginable chore. However, if the modern split between mind and body is understood as a constructed and negotiated project, then it might just be possible to re-construct the relationship on a different grounding.

Many of the tensions depicted and revealed in the filmic story of *Stand and Deliver* indicates that mixed motive intentions appear to be the prevailing norm in contemporary Western society. It seems ironic that culturally explicit desires by many moderns to fix meanings has resulted in increased awareness of alternatives. These alternatives are often revealed through an imaginal alterity, the gappy spaces, in the lifeworld of human beings. This alteric quality to contemporary life provides the opportunity for individuals and communities to see and speak about a different way of being together. These spaces as gaps, perhaps as difference itself, are reflective of life's contradictory nature. And it is often in the gaps, spaces, and differences between human beings, some of whom are teachers and some of whom are students, where true pedagogic moments, situations, and relations happen. This film's alteric nature also provides the possibility to wonder about a certain way of being with students by pointing to privileged poles of Western binary oppositions. Simply, the film's quest to exclusively tell one sanctioned story--success through desire, determination, and dedication--raises questions not only about a particular modernized perception of being an adult and a student, but also suggests in a postmodern sense what could be excluded, alienated, and exploited by such a vision.

There is much to admire in the relationship between Escalante and his students as depicted towards the end of *Stand and Deliver*. Despite Escalante's initial desire to mathematically reduce life to treatments of desire, hard work, and faith in a positivistically-defined system of thought and practice, there is also evidence that that very process of legitimating provides the condition to wonder about what it would be like to be different. In this regard, Escalante becomes involved with his students to find other ways of being together. Despite the film's (mis)understanding of difference and similarity, by positivistically framing this tension as something poverty-stricken and requiring equalization, there is nevertheless a lesson for teachers and students in the film's narrative tensions. The lesson, at its most pedagogical, shows that the language of human relation pedagogy is not the minded language of equational, symbolic, empirically-based mathematics. Pedagogy is not formula driven. Despite countless empiricist positivistic attempts to define educative relations in that way, the pedagogic relationship remains undescribable in any quantifiably reduced terms. When admirers of Escalante's success ask about the secret formula for his success, Escalante is essentially at a loss to offer a reply. What makes the pedagogic relationship so powerful is that it is beyond, between, and beneath words. The pedagogic relationship is a relationship that is possible even in very positivistically oppressive circumstances. As a matter of interest, those very circumstances often bring about pedagogical alternatives as an alternative to the pedagogically starved desires by some positivistic practitioners for prescriptively-defined relations. A pedagogic relationship, then, is special because it is made possible by life's antinomic qualities; qualities that can never really be suppressed, or refined into non-existence through positivistic formulations. A pedagogic relationship is not rooted in mathematical probability formulas, but in life's possibility occurrences. The pedagogic relationship lives in uncertainty as opposed to precision, in exploring horizons as opposed to mapping boundaries, and in each other human being's mutuality as opposed to his or her exclusivity. And it is here the body of the lesson of *Stand and Deliver* appears the strongest.

Remember the powerful scene in Escalante's bedroom when he has hit what he thinks is a bottom to his teaching career. At this point Escalante is in a state of personal and professional despair. He is also in a condition of readiness. Escalante in beginning to doubt that his understanding of the world is really engaging in a form of pedagogical questioning. When Escalante begins to question his very beingness as a thinking Cartesian subject, he actually begins to become more reflectively conscious that he is also an intuitive and soulful subject. As surface-scratching as his initial questioning may be, it cannot be pushed aside by the modern Cartesian subject's desire to increase applications of objectification in order to hide, or deny, or eradicate the feelings such questions lead to. Once the questioning of personal and professional competence begins for a teacher, it becomes evident that empirical, positivistic responses will not suffice. But what is really powerful in Escalante's search for a response to his doubting, is the way he is aided in his questioning by an insightful and powerful teacher, Fabiola.

Fabiola, as a woman and as a mother and as that form of human being often defined by the patriarchal story as too embodied, emotional, intuitive, and earthy, opens the possibility, via a conversation, for Escalante to begin to understand the need for a subjective space for others. Fabiola's voice had been heard throughout the film. She was the one asking for a space for her husband from Joe the neighbour's skepticism, from Ana's father's prejudices, and within her own family of Escalante himself for time for his own children. Through Fabiola's counsel Escalante is able to see that he can no longer stand before his students and deliver them into the world. He realizes he must stand with them. Just like Fabiola stands with Escalante, Escalante demonstrates the lesson he learned from Fabiola by going to the EST investigators to show he now stands with his students. In doing so, Escalante breaks the rules of the sanctioned way that males are required to speak to each other. It is a passionate Escalante, now looking more like his students than ever before, who tells the investigators that the struggle for his students' hearts, souls, and minds is not to be regarded as simply another administrative chore. Despite all the ETS officials' formal attempts to objectify and distance themselves from the situation by transferring it into the realm of administrative procedures, Escalante, now like his street-wise and passionate students, makes it very plain what he believes the struggle is really all about, power. The reaction by the ETS officials confirms for Escalante that he is where he should be and doing what he should be doing. Having subjectively experienced some of his students' joy and pain, Escalante knows at a most basic level, that despite the great odds aligning against his students, he must show them how to face up to that which seeks to reduce every human encounter to a statistical residue.

In spite of Escalante's early focus on his own ganas (his own modern desire and his own quest to be perfect), by films' end, he goes on to begin to establish a pedagogic relationship with his students. The possibility of this special kind of relationship bridges the gaps between the modernist desire for a minded focus on mathematical understanding of life, and the personal, small narrative, embodied history of those who desire to become a disciple of the discipline. As an embodied human being, Escalante brings to life, in a sum greater than the parts, a pedagogic quality that lies beyond his being a mathematician or an expert in desire. He is, first and foremost, becoming a pedagogically sensitive teacher.

As a pedagogically attentive teacher, Escalante's subjectivity, responsibility, and intentionality often belie the very world he seems to represent. In a sense the counterpoint of his humor, heritage, and body, deconstructs the projected mathematical competencies Escalante initially hoped to perpetuate in his classroom. The result is Escalante creates a space in his classroom, home, and heart for others. When Escalante comes to understand that he makes a difference in the students' lives simply because they have made a difference in his life, Escalante is not the same teacher he was at the film's start. Symbolized by the students' reconstruction of his vehicle, as if it were one of their vehicles, is the students' way of saying Escalante is now, and perhaps will always be, part of what they are and are becoming.

In a sense this transformation of Escalante teacherness can be traced to a teacher-student flip that occurs in the film. This flip is necessary and required in order to put Escalante in his rightful place as a pedagogically sensitive and influential teacher. Fabiola and the ganas students take turns as Escalante's teacher. In a sense it is in the flipped space of teacher as learner, and learner as teacher, that both Escalante and his students come to understand the power of the possibility of self-making in a community of others.

And so it becomes evident in ***Stand and Deliver***, that it is Escalante's embodied imperfections, not his intellectual promise; it is Escalante's pedagogical sensitivity not his authoritative power, that creates the condition for the possibility for a pedagogic relationship with his students to define itself. Escalante's formal body of mathematical knowledge is bounded by a discovery of the necessary passion for learning that a ready and willing student body embodies. Escalante's students move him to be different with them. They ensure he understands their differences by being the condition of that which constantly calls to Escalante to reflectively wonder if he is doing the right thing for his students. They authorize him to be there for them. But also contained in their offer is the requirement that the students' open themselves to Escalante's influence and, thus, make themselves vulnerable to that influence. And it is that vulnerability to which Escalante must be responsible.

Stand and Deliver is not a film that stands up for a thoroughly modern vision of a success-at-any-cost educational relationship. Despite aspects of the film's narrative that attempt to glorify the achievements of a powerful teacher and his under-privileged students, the film actually offers a space in which to reflect on how pedagogic spaces might be created by the antinomic and contradictory qualities of life itself. In a teacher's questioning, and doubting, of what it means to be a teacher of students in a way that is pedagogically sensitive and productive, there is a wonderful pedagogical possibility. That is from this wondering, the reflective responses might manifest themselves in the actions and non-actions of an attentive and responsive teacher who seeks to bring ready and willing students together with the discipline at hand.

Is it possible that the film *Stand and Deliver* moves its audience to feel, as Escalante and his students did, what it means pedagogically to live in the tensions between the risk in the vulnerability of standing up for others, and the joy of the security of having others stand up for us?

CHAPTER SIX

DEAD POETS SOCIETY AS A PEDAGOGICAL EXEMPLAR:

A QUESTION OF RESPONSIBILITY

Introduction

What follows are three readings based upon the feature motion picture *Dead Poets Society* (Weir, 1989). The format for exploration is similar to that used in the exploration of *Stand and Deliver.*

READING ONE: *Dead Poets Society* as a narrative [and *interrupted*] text

"That you have but slumber'd here / While these visions did appear. / And this weak and idle theme, / No more yielding but a dream, / Gentles do not reprehend." (Puck - *A Midsummer Nights Dream.*)

Principal characters in *Dead Poets Society* [37]

Robin Williams as John Keating
Ethan Hawke as Todd Anderson
Gale Hansen as Charlie Dalton
Allelon Ruggiero as Steven Meeks
Norman Lloyd as Mr. Nolan
Leon Pownall as McAllister
Robert Leonard as Neil Perry
Josh Charles as Knox Overstreet
Dylan Kussman as Richard Cameron
James Waterston as Gerald Pitts
Kurtwood Smith as Mr. Perry
Alexandra Powers as Chris Noel

Scene 1. From the dark screen shines: "Touchstone Pictures Presents / In association with Silver Screen Partners IV / A Steven Hart Production in association / with Witt-Thomas production." Then there is a focus on a painting of several well-groomed young men. Panning down the focus moves to a young boy, in a suit and cap, who has his tie straightened by his mother. "A Peter Weir Film." A briefcase opens to reveal a set of bagpipes. A photographer takes photos of two young boys. A solitary candle burns. "DEAD POETS SOCIETY." Beside the candle two men whisper. Boys with ornate banners in royal purple with golden letters gather together. "Robin Williams." The bagpipes begin. The character credits roll as the scene continues. A procession advances--three young boys leading, the piper, Dr. Hager with a candle, and the banner carriers--into the great hall filled with parents and boys. The procession gives way to Headmaster Nolan who stands at the front podium.

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[37] The following musical score extracts are used in *Dead Poets Society*: "Suite III in D Allegro" composed by Handel, "Symphony No. 9 in D Minor" composed by Beethoven, "Piano Concerto No. 5 in E Flat Major" & "Op. 73 Emperor" composed by Beethoven.

The following songs and extracts of songs are used in *Dead Poets Society*: "The Battle of New Orleans" by Jimmie Driftwood, "Let's Have a Party" by Jessie Robinson, "Stranded in the Jungle" by Al Curdy, James Johnson, & Ernestine Smith, "Hey Little Girl" by Henry Byrd, "Rainbow Voice" by David Hykes, "Ridgeway Fight Song" by Jerry Rehberg, "The Field of Anthenry" by Peter St. John, "Sound Off" by Willie Duckworth & Bernard Lentz.

"Ladies and Gentlemen. Boys. The light of knowledge," says Headmaster Nolan. Dr. Hager with a lit candle in hand moves to the first row of seated boys. Hager lights the first boy's candle. That boy's candle is used to light the next candle and so on up and down the rows of seated boys. The audience applauds.

Nolan speaks, "One hundred years ago, in 1859, 41 boys sat in this room and were asked the same question that now greets you at the start of each semester. Gentlemen, what are the four pillars?"

The boys stand and shout, "Tradition, Honor, Discipline, Excellence."

"In the first year ("Written by Tom Schulman.") Welton graduated five students and last year we graduated fifty-one and more than 75% of these went on to the Ivy Leagues," says Nolan. A loud ovation. "This kind of accomplishment ("Directed by Peter Weir.") is the result of a strong dedication to education and the principles taught here. This is why you parents have been sending us your sons. This is why we are the best preparatory school in the United States." Students and parents exchange glances of approval as they applaud. Mr. Nolan beams his approval. Among a row of sober-looking teachers there is very little emotion. "As you know our beloved Mr. Port of the English Department retired last year," says Mr. Nolan. Nolan's black robe, with a great seal about his neck, is all that is visible above the podium. "You will have the opportunity later to meet his replacement Mr. John Keating, himself an honors graduate of this school and who for the past several years has been teaching at the highly regarded Chester School in London." A smiling

Keating stands momentarily. [*This scene outlines the educational system upon which the school is founded. Performative competence seems to be honored as being of the highest value.*]

Scene 2. The school's green courtyard is alive with boys and parents. Boys mill about, luggage seems to be everywhere, and parents say their goodbyes to their sons. In the door of the great hall Mr. and Mrs. Anderson congratulate Nolan on the ceremony. Mrs. Anderson introduces their youngest son Todd to Mr. Nolan. Nolan takes Todd's hand and says, "You have some big shoes to fill young man. Your brother was one of our finest."

"Thank you," says Todd.

Mr. Perry and his son Neil are next to stop to speak with Nolan who says, "Neil, we expect great things of you this year."

Neil replies, "Thank you sir." Mr. Perry confirms Neil will not disappoint the school. In the courtyard the farewells continue. Boys hug their mothers, shake hands with their fathers, and overhead the school bell tolls. The river appears in the foreground then a red-leaf forest and the school's towers in the background. [*Parents express their wishes to the headmaster and he confirms that great things are expected at Welton of its students in accordance with the parental desires.*]

Scene 3. Neil Perry runs into Todd Anderson in the courtyard. After the boys introduce themselves Neil tells Todd they are to be roommates. Todd's brother was an outstanding academic student at the school and Neil acknowledges the family connection. [*The boys are most conscious of the expectations of them and the pressures to act responsibly to ensure their success.*]

Scene 4. Dr. Hager receives instructions from a father of a sickly boy. In the dorm hallway there is the commotion of boys moving in. Richard Cameron enters Neil's room and says, "So I hear you got the new kid. Looks like a stiff." At that moment Todd (the new kid) enters. He has obviously overheard Cameron. Cameron leaves sheepishly.

Neil says, "Listen. Don't mind Cameron, he was born with his foot in his mouth." Todd places his suitcase on the bed as the three boys appear at Neil's dorm door. The boys are Knox Overstreet, Charlie Dalton, and Steven Meeks.

"Rumor has it you did summer school," says Dalton entering the room.

"Yes. Chemistry. My father thought I should get ahead," replies Neil. The boys enter and shake hands with Neil. The door is then closed.

"What are the four pillars Gentlemen?" mockingly asks Dalton as he reclines on Neil's bed.

The boys reply, "Travesty, Horror, Decadence, Excrement." They laugh. A discussion begins on forming a study group. Dalton lights a cigarette. Neil introduces Dalton, Knox, and Meeks to Todd. The group reviews Todd's brother's incredible academic accomplishments at Welton. But a sudden knock at the door causes Dalton to quickly hide his cigarette. He fans the air to dissipate the smoke. Neil Perry's father enters.

"Neil, I have just spoken to Mr. Nolan and you seem to be involved in too many extra-curricular activities this semester. I have decided you should drop the school Annual."

"But I am assistant editor this year," protests Neil.

"I am sorry," says Neil's father forcefully.

"But father I can't. It wouldn't be fair," pleads Neil.

Noticing his son's resistance Mr. Perry takes Neil outside the dorm room. Then he grabs his son's arm and says, "Don't ever dispute me in public, understand? When you are finished medical school and you are out of school you can do as you damn well please. But until then you do as I tell you. Got it?"

"Sorry sir," Neil replies.

"You know how much this means to your mother," says Mr. Perry.

"You know me, always taking on too much," suggests Neil.

"Well, if you need anything you let us know."

Neil nods a "yes" and Mr. Perry leaves. The boys, having remained in Neil's room until now, emerge.

Dalton asks, "Why don't they let you do what you want?"

Neil says to Dalton, "Ya sure, that's rich. Like you guys tell your parents off."

"OK, so I don't like it any more than you do," says Dalton.

"Don't tell me how to talk to my father. You guys are the same way," says Neil.

"So what are you going to do?" asks Knox.

"Drop the Annual," says Neil and to cover his disappointment he adds, "I don't give a damn about any of it." The conversation then swings to study group assignments. The boys invite Todd to be part of the group. [*The contrast is made, albeit in rather black and white terms, between parental desires and student interests. However, if each parental relationship is like that between Neil and his father, then there is little dialogue. Rather, communication is one-way. The dominant monologue used by Mr. Perry is rooted in a language of power. Then Mr. Perry adds emotional pressure to Neil by citing Neil's mother's desire to see her son succeed. Even though the boys only offer token resistance to their parents, as Neil points out, there is a hint of readiness on their part for a different relationship with their parents and with Welton.*]

Scene 5. The school's steeple tower looms in the foreground. The school bell tolls. From across the river the geese honk. At the Academy the boys push and shove on the stairwells. The noise is overwhelming as they rush to the dining room. "Slow down boys. Slow down boys," booms Dr. Hager who is caught in the rush.

Later in a physical science lab a teacher hands out a project list with accompanying due dates. In the Latin class the students conjugate verbs as McAllister, the instructor, paces back and forth with a wooden pointer flicking between his fingers. In another classroom a mathematics instructor speaks of the exactness of trigonometry, but his real concern is the precision with which each student does his homework. "Anyone failing to turn in any homework assignment will be penalized one point off their final grade. So let me urge you now not to test me on this point," he says emphatically. In yet another classroom from behind the adjoining office door peeks John Keating. The students await him and after a few moments he enters the room whistling. The students automatically sit up. Keating says nothing but strolls to the back of the room where he opens the door and steps outside. Several moments later he sticks his head in and says, "Well come on." The students are confused. Soon several boys and then all the boys get up to follow Keating. They take their course text.

Keating leads the boys into the main hallway and once he has them gathered there he says, "'Oh Captain, My Captain.' Who knows where that comes from?" There is silence. "Anybody?" asks Keating. The boy's faces are blank. "Not a clue? A poem by Walt Whitman about Mr. Abraham Lincoln," volunteers Keating. "Now in this class you can either call me Mr. Keating or slightly more daring, Oh Captain, My Captain." The students look at each other somewhat puzzled. Keating continues on to tell the class he also attended "Helton" and survived. At that time he was not the mental giant they see before them now. Some boys smile. Most are still confused. Keating presses on with his story, "I was the intellectual equivalent of the 98 pound weakling. I would go to the beach and people would kick copies of Byron in my face." More boys smile. "Now Mr. Pitts," says Keating checking the list. "A rather unfortunate name. Where are you?" continues Keating. Pitts steps forward. "Open the book to page 542 and read the first stanza you find there."

Pitts reads, "Gather ye rosebuds while ye may. Old time is still a fleeing and this same flower that smiles today tomorrow will be dying."

Keating repeats the verse and adds, "The Latin term for that sentiment is *Carpe diem.* Who knows what that means?"

Meeks, the Latin scholar, quickly says, "*Carpe diem.* Seize the day."

Keating repeats, "Gather ye rose buds while ye may. Why does the writer use these lines?"

"He was in a hurry," replies Dalton attempting to be quick-witted.

"No. Bing. Thanks for playing anyway," replies Keating just as quick. "Because we are food for worms lads. Believe it or not each and everyone of us in this room is one day going to turn cold and die." Keating then shows the class the faces of the boys of Welton Academy's past. There in the photo cabinet is the entire photo history of Welton. Keating urges his boys to really look at the boys in the photos. As his boys look in the reflective glass, Keating says, "Not that different from you are they? Same hair cut. Full of hormones just like you. Invincible. Like you feel. The world is their oyster. They believed they were destined for great things just like many of you. Full of hope just like you." At that moment as faces from the past look out at faces from the present looking in, Keating repeats, "Their eyes are full of hope just like you. Did they wait until it was too late? Did they obtain even one iota of what they were capable of? Gentlemen those boys are now fertilizer for daffodils! If you listen close you can hear them whisper their legacy to you. Go on lean in. Hear it?" The boys begin to lean closer to the cabinets. Keating presses behind them himself as if trying to hear the message.

He whispers as the boys focus on the photos: "*Carpe...carpe...carpe...diem.* Seize the day boys. Make your lives extraordinary." The row upon row of faces of young men inside the photo cabinet and outside the cabinet are blurred together. [*We are introduced, just as the boys are, to Keating. His style and focus are instantly seen as different from the other examples of teaching provided just before we see Keating. In a rather performative scene we can already see that Keating may be the very source upon which the students might draw to foster the resistance they already are inclined toward regarding their present state of affairs. Thus, the scene is riddled with tensions. The images of teaching at Welton are stark, conservative, and basic. This way of educating is prescriptive, denotative, and expository with a grounding in positivism. Teacher monologues dominate the educative relation. These are relations based upon a model favoring knowledge dispensing and student accountability. But with the introduction of Keating another educational attitude and practice is also evident. This educational dispensation prefers description, narrative, and* *dialogue. The form of the educative relationship favored here seems to be set up by Keating's teaching gifts. He is vital and humorous. He possesses a certain understanding of the world, and actively stands up for that vision of the world. Keating also shows an improvisational resoluteness as opposed to a prescriptive dictatorial certainty. Most importantly Keating seems to offer a way of knowing how to care about a student's needs by having some understanding of a student's subjectivity. The use of images by Keating and the use of the voices of others certainly differs from the other teaching styles showcased. In a school dedicated to producing extraordinary young men Keating's message is that they must assume the responsibility to make themselves extraordinary. If the showcase is any indicator the school cannot accomplish this for them. The process is not passive, but rather active. Still one wonders if Keating is not also advocating something rather hedonistic and self-serving in his charge that his students must "seize the day" in order to be extraordinary.*]

Scene 6. The boys pile out of Keating's classroom and say: "That was weird ...", "Ya, but different ...", "Spooky if you ask me ...", "Is he going to test us on that stuff...".

"Come on Cameron don't you get anything?" asks Dalton. [*The challenge has been made by Keating to his charges. The safety, security, and requirements of heading in the required direction are beginning to be questioned by the opportunity afforded by taking risks, being different, and seeking changes.*]

Scene 7. In the boys' shower room the physical education teacher tells everyone to hurry. The boys talk about their study groups. Knox says he will miss tonight's session. He is having dinner with the Danburry family. They are family friends of his father's.

Scene 8. In his room, at his desk, Todd scribbles in his notebook "SEIZE THE DAY." He looks over at a pile of homework. The "seize the day" page is ripped out and launched towards the waste basket. Todd pulls his texts towards him.

Scene 9. Dr. Hager escorts Knox to his supper invitation at the Danburry's. The black car drives into a beautiful sunset and emerges to pass through town. The car comes to a stop at the Danburry's. A young blond girl (Chris) answers the door when Knox knocks. Knox is amazed by her beauty but manages to introduce himself and Dr. Hager. Hager waits for Knox to enter the house then returns to the Academy. Mrs. Danburry corrects Knox's impression that Chris is a member of the Danburry family. Chris is Chet Danburry's girlfriend. As Chris goes upstairs in a response to Chet's calls, Mr. Danburry leads Knox into the study indicating to Knox that he looks just like his father. [*Have we seen Knox's reason to take a chance?*]

Scene 10. The boys are gathered in the common study room. Pitts and Meeks attempt to get a crystal radio set to work. Most of the other boys are studying. Knox enters upon returning from his dinner at the Danburry's. Knox's friends have several questions and to all of them Knox replies, "Terrible." The boys are surprised at this response and inquire further.

"Tonight I met the most beautiful girl I have ever seen in my entire life," says Knox. "It is terrible because she is practically engaged to Chet Danburry (star of the local football team). It is a tragedy. A girl this beautiful in love with such a jerk."

"Forget her and open your trig book," says the practical Cameron.

"I just can't forget her Cameron," says Knox. "I certainly just can't think about trig."

Meeks and Pitts manage to tune in the radio, but Dr. Hager enters with his usual scowl to tell the boys they have five minutes left before lights out. Meeks and Pitts try to hide the radio. To the inquiring Hager they say it is a science project--radar to be exact. His scowl intensifies.

Scene 11. Keating is in his classroom. He is at his desk with a textbook before him. "Gentlemen open to page 21 of the introduction. Mr. Perry will you read the opening paragraph to the Preface to Understanding Poetry."

Neil reads: "Understanding poetry by Dr. J. Evans Prichard. To fully understand poetry you first must be fluid with its meter, rhyme, and figures of speech. That leads to two questions. (1) How artfully have the objectives of the poem been reached? (2) How important is each objective? Question one rates the poem's perfection. Question two rates its importance. Once these questions have been answered deciphering the poem's meaning is a relatively simple matter. (Keating gets up from his desk and goes to the chalkboard.) If the poem's score for perfection is plotted on the horizontal of the graph and the importance plotted on the vertical, then the calculating of the total area of the poem yields the measure of greatness. (The students begin copying the diagram Neil is describing and Keating is drawing on the board.) A sonnet by Byron may score high on vertical but only average on the horizontal. (Keating plots Byron's score.) A plotted Shakespearean sonnet may score high both horizontally and vertically yielding a total mass area thereby revealing the poem to be truly great.[38] (Keating plots the sonnet score.) As you proceed through the poetry in this book practice this rating method. As your ability to evaluate grows in this manner so will your enjoyment and understanding of poetry."

Keating has written PxI=G on the board. He turns to the class and waits. The students scurry to copy the chart down. But Keating says dramatically, "Excrement! That is what I think of Mr. J. Evans Prichard. We are not laying pipe here Gentlemen. We are talking poetry." Cameron quickly scribbles out the diagram he has drawn in with a ruler. Keating continues, "How can you describe poetry like American Bandstand. I like Byron; I gave him a 42, but I can't dance to it. Now rip out that page. Go on. Rip out the entire page. You heard me. Rip it out. Rip it out." The others hesitate but Dalton rips immediately

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[38] The diagram Keating draws on the board is like this:

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          A poem's perfection scale.
Importance:
          .************
          .......********    S is Shakespeare
          .......***S****    B is Byron
          .......********
          ..B....********   PxI=G
          .......********
          .......********
          .......********
Perfection:   ..................................
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upon being told to do so. "Tear out the entire introduction. I want it gone. Rip it out. Be gone J. E. Prichard, Ph.D." Still many of the boys seem confused. "It is not the Bible; you will not go to hell for this. Make a clear tear. I want nothing left of it." Slowly more boys begin to rip their books. Cameron uses a ruler to make an exact tear, but most of the others tear haphazardly. Keating leaves to get a trash can. At that moment McAllister, who was passing by, sees a scene of students ripping pages. McAllister barges into the room.

"What the hell is going on here?" shouts McAllister. The ripping stops. At that moment Keating returns with the basket and not seeing McAllister says, "I don't hear any ripping."

"Mr. Keating?" says a surprised McAllister.

"Mr. McAllister?" says an equally surprised Keating.

"I'm sorry I did not know you were here," adds McAllister quickly.

"I am," adds Keating just as quickly.

"So you are. Excuse me," says a confused McAllister who leaves after pausing at the door--suspicious, perhaps intrigued.

"Keep ripping gentlemen ... this is a battle, a war ... and the casualties could be your hearts and souls," continues Keating. The trash can is passed about as torn pages are tossed in. "Now in my class you will learn to think for yourself again. You will learn to savor words and language. No matter what anybody tells you, words and ideas can change the world. I see the look in Mr. Pitts' eyes that 19th century literature has nothing to do with going to business or medical school. Many may be agreeing simply saying we should learn Mr. Prichard and learn our rhyme and meter and go quietly about our business. I have a secret for you. Huddle up. Huddle." Keating kneels on one knee in the center of the classroom among the desks. The boys gather around. "We don't read and write poetry because it is cute; we read and write poetry because we are members of the human race. The human race is filled with passion. Medicine, law, business, engineering these are noble pursuits and necessary to sustain life, but poetry, beauty, romance, and love these are what we stay alive for. Hope. Commitment. Of life. The questions of these recurring. Of endless trains of cities filled with the foolish. What good amid these. Oh Me. Oh Life. The answer is that you are here. Life exists. And identity. That the powerful play goes on and you may contribute a verse. The powerful play goes on and you may contribute a verse. What will your verse be?" [*Again we see Keating's intent and style in contrast to what is obviously the norm at Welton. The boys have been conditioned to honor the sacredness of the text. But the words of such texts are overwhelmingly prescriptive according to Keating. Keating points to what is excluded in such text type's dominance. In a critical analysis of poetry what is missing is any sense of the poetic. That is poetry, and the understanding of poetry, as both compression and expansion brought together in a fruitful tension, is absent. Keating even brings this tension forward in a personal way by using Pitts' difficulty in seeing the merit of poetry as something other than mechanical. The poetry Keating wants to explore is pre-mechanical in thought and intent. He seeks to offer the students a journey through the thoughts of the metaphoric Romantics. And in presenting his lesson Keating again demonstrates his sense of vocation, a passion for his discipline, a certain improvisational resoluteness, and a sense of vitality and a sense of humor. It is interesting to see how, at the end, after physically removing the preamble that insists upon an empirical understanding of poetry, and romantic poetry at that, Keating has the boys physically move from their rows of desks to gather around him as he kneels at the center. There he asks more questions than there are answers to. But still evident in Keating's stance is a hope through a commitment to forming a sense of identity via the interplay of exploring the tensions between who one is and who one could become, all the while living in a community of others seeking to do the same.*]

Scene 12. In the Academy's dining room a prayer is said. Keating and his colleagues begin filling their plates with food. McAllister and Keating sit together. McAllister says of Keating's class, "Fascinating, misguided though it was. You take a big risk by encouraging them to become artists John. When they realize they are not Rembrandts, Shakespeares, or Mozarts they will hate you for it." Keating responds that he is not talking about artists but free thinkers.

"Free thinkers? At seventeen?" laughs McAllister.

"Funny," says Keating, "I never pegged you as a cynic."

"Not a cynic ... a realist," replies McAllister then he recites, "Show me the heart unfettered by foolish dreams, and I'll show you a happy man."

Keating responds, "But only in their dreams can men be truly free. It was always thus, and always thus will be."

"Tennyson?" inquires McAllister.

"Keating," says Keating with an impish grin as McAllister also smiles acknowledging Keating's wit.

The students are also in the same dining hall. Neil has found an old Academy yearbook. In it he points out a picture of the young Keating. Keating had been an editor of the Annual and a member of the Dead Poets Society. "The man most likely to do anything," reads Neil of Keating's biography. Several boys have questions about the Dead Poets Society. However, they must stash the book as the ever vigil Dr. Hager tells them to see him after supper for their punishment for reading at the table. [*Keating and McAllister engage in a debate about what constitutes educational intent and what constitutes a teacher's responsibility. Keating's gift is that rather than making a point which seems to be McAllister's desire, he seizes the moment in a pedagogical sense as an opportunity to illustrate the point he wishes to make. It is appropriate then that the students have found the Annual that confirms that Keating seems to practice what he preaches and has done so for some time despite living in an academic world entrenched in the kind of thought McAllister is giving voice to.*]

Scene 13. The school buildings stand tall around the grassy quad. Keating walks toward the grassy hills. His students run after him and call, "Sir. Sir." He seems not to hear. They change their call to, "My Captain, My Captain." Keating stops and turns to face the boys.

They show him the Annual. He turns from the group of boys to browse the text and then he kneels. Neil kneels beside him and asks, "What about the Dead Poets Society?"

Keating says, "I doubt the present administration would look too favorably upon that. Gentlemen can you keep a secret?" The boys circle around Keating. "The Dead Poets are dedicated to sucking the marrow out of life. The name of Thoreau would be invoked at the beginning of every meeting. We gathered at the old Indian caves and took turns reading from Thoreau, Whitman, and Shelly. The Biggies. Even some of our own verse. The enchantment of the moment. Then let poetry work its magic."

"A bunch of guys sitting around reading poetry," says Knox sounding disappointed.

Keating replies they were not just a bunch of guys like some Greek organization. "We were romantics. We did not just read poetry. We let it drip from our tongues like honey. Spirits soared, women swooned, and Gods were created. Gentlemen not a bad way to spend an evening. Thanks Mr. Perry for the stroll down amnesia lane. Especially my picture." Keating stands and walks toward the lake leaving the boys standing in the grassy common.

"Dead Poets Society!" says Neil. The school bell rings. "We go tonight. Is everybody in?" asks Neil. He tells the others he knows where the cave is. The bell rings again.

Dalton asks, "Do you know how many demerits we are talking about?" As the boys run back to the school they yell at each other, "We have to be careful." "Can't get caught." "No shit, Sherlock."

The booming voice of Dr. Hager calls from the school, "You boys there, hurry up." As they run toward the school each boy says he is in. [*In describing what went on at the cave Keating opens up to the students again the questions of time and space. What is the orientation to life that is required that will enable a human being to face the past, present, and future in life-giving manner? Is there a need for such an orientation to be an* *either/or decision? In outlining a different way to see and experience life Keating offers a sense of humor, and active hope in the face of feelings that all is lost. He also shows an interpretive intelligence and a thoughtful maturity in his descriptions of the Dead Poets Society. We also see that the description is enough for the boys to want to explore an option where previously there has been little desire to become anything other than what was designed for them to become by the school and by their parents respectively. But are the boys ready? Is risk, fear, and delight now part of their lives as they never have felt before? What of Keating's educative responsibility in this regard? Is he not setting the boys off on a quest contrary to what Nolan and the boy's parents would sanction?*]

Scene 14. There is a map and many pointing fingers. The boys whisper to each other as they sit together in McAllister's class. McAllister calls from his desk for the group to get to work on the assigned project. Neil still tries to convince Todd to attend the meeting of Dead Poets Society. Todd can come and be part of the group and not read unless he wants to suggests Neil realizing how shy Todd is about being a public person. Again McAllister puts his pipe aside and says, "Shut up will you." [*With this scene a shift begins. Normally films about educational encounters follow the teacher's story from A to Z. However, this film turns to explore the impact of Keating's teachings on the boys. The film seems to turn to follow Keating's promise to the boys that if they explore what really exists deep within each of them, and if only they are willing to seize the opportunity, great adventures await them.*]

Scene 15. The boys, dressed in bath robes, wander around the washroom. Neil informs Todd he is "officially" in the Dead Poets Society. Neil leaves the room and goes into the hallway and to his room. He enters his room and shuts the door. He selects some dark clothing and a flashlight that he places on his desk beside a text entitled *Five Centuries of Verse*. Neil opens the cover and on the inner page is the name J. Keating. These words appear on the front page, "To be read at the opening of the Dead Poets Society meeting." Neil smiles. [*As an aside: how did Neil obtain this specific book?*]

Scene 16. In the dark there are numerous flashes of light. From the shadows emerge several hooded figures who scurry down the Academy's stairs and past the hall of photos. A big dog patrols at the bottom of the stairs and after one bark he receives a handful of biscuits. Dr. Hager is upstairs in his room and pauses for a moment. He enters the hall but seeing and hearing nothing returns to his room.

The boys slip out the side door. The night engulfs the hooded figures. With flashlights dancing on the ground, they race across the Academy grounds. The music is suspenseful. Eventually the boys come to the Indian cave.

Scene 17. Smoke filters out from a failed fire inside the cave. "OK forget the fire," says Neil. "I hereby reconvene the Dead Poets Society." The boys cheer. "The meetings will be conducted by myself and the other new initiates now present and Todd Anderson, who prefers not to read, will keep minutes of the meeting. I will now read the traditional opening message from society member Henry David Thoreau: 'I went to the woods because I wanted to live deliberately. I wanted to live deep and suck out all the marrow of life. To put to rout all that was not right, and now that I come to die I had discovered I had not lived.'"

"I'll second that," says Knox as he puffs a cigarette.

Later the boys produce what they have brought to share for intermission--raisins, cookies, apples, half a dinner roll, and so on. Then Neil volunteers a story about a dark and rainy night and an old lady who had a passion for jigsaw puzzles. She pieces the puzzle together and realizes, to her astonishment, she is in the center of the picture. With fumbling hands she placed the last pieces which show the face of a demented mad man at the window. The last thing this old lady ever heard was breaking glass.

"I got one that is even better than that," says Cameron. He begins to tell a story about a young married couple driving through the forest, but every one jumps in telling the ending. Pitts reads out a limerick about a woman having her throat cut. Dalton is next to move front and center. He carefully unfolds a paper to reveal a nude woman. The boys snicker. He recites, "Teach me to love. Go teach thyself more. I teach the professor to wit. The God of Love if such a thing there be learns to love from me." Everyone claps enthusiastically.

As the night wears on Neil reads from Alfred Lord Tennyson, "Come my friends. It is not too late to seek a newer world. For my purpose is to sail beyond the sunset. And though we are not now that strength which in old days moved Earth and Heaven. That which we are we are one equal temper of heroic heart. May we but by time and fate be strong in will. To share. To seek. To strive. To seek. To find and not to yield."

Then Meeks chants, "And then I had religion; then I had a vision. I could not turn from their revealing in derision. Then I saw the Congo creep'n through the black, cutting through the forest with a golden trap. Then I saw the Congo, through the black, cutting through the forest with a golden trap ...." The boys clap to the rhythm and pound on a dusty barrel as a drum. They dance around the cave chanting and clapping. Lights flash. They move out of the cave still chanting. The Academy grounds appear. The school bell rings twice. The hooded figures run toward the Academy. [*This scene features what seems to be a rather innocent meeting of the Dead Poets Society. Certainly there must be ample opportunity to psychoanalytically interpret aspects of the boys entering a womb-like cave only to emerge to a new morning. Pedagogically what is of interest is the forming of a new community of learners as each boy commits to an attempt to seize the moment they desire. But one gets a feeling from the poetry cited that an attempt to explore the horizon involves serious challenges to solid boundaries.*]

Scene 18. In his classroom Keating says to his students, "Now language was developed for a reason, and that is?" He points to Todd. "Come on are you a man or an ameba?" Keating stands beside Todd and sees Todd's eyes. Keating instantly turns and asks Neil the same. Neil responds, "To communicate."

"No, to woo women," replies Keating. The boys laugh. He goes on to introduce the lesson's subject, William Shakespeare. The boys moan and groan. Keating counters by saying that studying Shakespeare is not the same as a root canal. It is important to study the man as someone who writes interesting things. He says, "Oh Tibus bring your friend hither," in the voice stereotypical of a gay man. And as Marlon Brando, Keating says, "Friends, Romans, Countrymen ...." And mimicking John Wayne, Keating says, "Is this a dagger I see before me ...." The boys laugh. Later in the class Keating is seated and the boys are gathered around him. He reads a passage about ways to eat dogs. The boys laugh at each subtle nuance of the reading.

Finally, Keating is at his desk which he walks around and then stands on. "Why do I stand up here?"

"To feel taller," comments Dalton.

"No. Thanks for playing, Mr. Dalton. I stand upon my desk to remind myself that we must constantly look at things in a different way." Then Keating circles on his desk surveying the room. "See, the world looks different from up here. You don't believe me? See for yourself. Come on. Come on," comments Keating as he gets the students to step on to his desk one at a time. "Just when you think you know something you have to re-look. Even if it seems silly or wrong," says Keating as the boys, one by one, file up and over his desk. "Boys, you must strive to find your voice. The longer you wait to begin the less likely to find it at all. Thoreau said, 'Men lead lives of quiet desperation.' Do not be resigned to that." The students continue to step up and down from his desk. "Don't just walk off the edge like lemmings. Look around you," charges Keating. The bell rings. "Yes dare to strike out and find new ground," says Keating as he gets his brief case. "In addition to your essay I would like you compose a poem of your own--an original work." As he gets to the back door of the classroom Keating flicks the lights. "That's right you have to deliver it out loud in front of the class for everybody on Monday." He leaves the room, but quickly reenters to catch Todd on the desk. Speaking directly to Todd, Keating says, "Don't think that I don't know this assignment scares the hell out of you the most." Keating walks out flipping the lights off. [*After a scene with the boys as the central focus* *where we begin to see how they are using Keating's teachings, Keating again appears in a classroom scene. In this lesson Keating uses a strong sense of humor. But every aspect of the class--as performative as it might be--seems to be intended to have the boy's focus on their own subjectivity, as opposed to Keating forcing his on them. Also of note is that in the present world Todd has lost his voice. Through Keating's own passion for his discipline and in an interpretive and resolute way of teaching, Keating demonstrates the true meaning of his chosen vocation--giving voice to self and to engage in a conversation with others. Keating wants Todd to stand up for something--preferably himself.*]

Scene 19. Oar blades dip into the blue river waters. The rowing crew strokes in harmony. Mr. Nolan, attired in school sweater, shouts through a megaphone from the shore the stroke counts. Meeks descends the clock tower after hooking up a radio antenna. He joins Pitts on the tower platform as music begins to roar from the crystal set. Two boys fence with swords in the forest. Pitts and Meeks dance on the roof top.

Inside the school in his room Todd sits in the corner on his bed. He is surrounded by crumpled pieces of paper. Neil enters the room laughing. He slips a piece of paper to Todd saying, "Found it." Todd reads: "Henley Hall presents *A Midsummer Nights Dream*." Neil tells Todd this is what he has been looking for. There will be open auditions and Neil is going to try out. Grabbing a bedspread and wrapping himself in it, Neil says, "Yes I am going to be an actor. Ever since I can remember I wanted to try this. I even tried to go to summer stock auditions last year but my father wouldn't let me. For the first time in my whole life I know what I want to do. For the first time I am going to do it whether my father wants me to or not." He tosses sheets of papers into the air. "*Carpe diem*," he shouts.

Todd, still a voice of reason, says, "How can you be in a play if your father will not let you?"

"First, I have to get the part then I can worry about that."

"But wouldn't he kill you if he finds out you went to an audition and didn't tell him?"

"He doesn't have to know about any of this," says Neil.

"That's impossible," replies Todd.

"Shit, nothing is impossible," says Neil.

Todd suggests Neil should tell his father. Neil replies, "That's a laugh. If I don't ask, it means I wouldn't be disobeying him." As Todd interrupts again Neil shouts, "Jesus, Todd whose side are you on?" There is silence. "I haven't even got the part yet. Can't I enjoy the idea for a while?" Todd returns to the torture of his poetry writing. Neil sits at the window bench and asks, "You're coming to the meeting this afternoon?" Todd shrugs. Neil says, "Nothing Mr. Keating says to you means shit to you does it, Todd? You're in the Club. Being in the Club means being stirred up by things. You look as stirred up as a cesspool."

"You want me out?" questions Todd.

Neil replies, "No. I want you in, but being in means doing something not just saying you're in."

"Look, Neil, I appreciate your concern. But I am not like that. You say things and people listen. I'm not like that. The point is there is nothing you can do about it but butt out. I can take care of myself just fine. Alright?"

Neil pauses. He says, "No."

"What do you mean no?" asks Todd.

Neil smiles. "No." Then he grabs Todd's poem draft and dashes over the furniture trying to read the poem aloud. Todd chases him around the room not quite able to get his poem back. Cameron enters the room and he enters the chase. Suddenly the other boys are in the room jumping from bed to desk to bed. Knox grabs a flute. Dalton a set of bongo drums. The chase continues. [*The workings of Keating's intentions begins in earnest with this scene. The debate between Neil and Todd seems to come down to one of rebellion* *against authority, or freedom versus conformity. But in their subjective terms, it also seems to come down to the boys wanting to be something other than what is presently being prescribed for them by their parents and the school. Neil has discovered his deepest desire. He wants to be an actor. Ironically he is already acting the part of the dutiful son. Although unsaid, Todd seems to want to be a poet. Again ironically he already is able to express himself in a most expressive way. Todd has an overpowering respect for words. Perhaps so much so that he feels small beside them. Yet Neil consciously decides to stand up for his vision of the world as difficult and as frightening as that may be. And in a sense he offers himself as an example to Todd. The scene ends with the boys physically being moved about the room. Is the chase on?*]

Scene 20. Knox rides his bike away from the Academy. As he rides along he suddenly swerves from the bike path with a loud whoopee. The birds take to flight as Knox peddles madly among the geese. A car and a truck loaded with kids in band uniforms pass by. The noise leads to a marshalling area of buses, vehicles, and people. Knox rides up to the scene. As he peddles slowly among the gathering he realizes it is a festive pep rally unfolding. Knox stops, removes his sunglasses, and he sees Chris. She is a cheerleader dressed in red and white with a huge R on her sweater. She is doing a routine with the other cheerleaders. Then Chris runs to Chet the star football player. Knox looks dejected. Chris jumps into Chet's arms. Knox turns to leave. [*Is Knox's desire again revealed in this scene? Does Knox's new desire as a lover of life entail the winning of the love of his life.*]

Scene 21. The boys walk with Keating who has a bag of soccer balls over his shoulder and one ball dancing at his foot. He says, "Some may argue that one sport is inherently better than another. For me sport is actually a chance for us to have other human beings push us to excel. I want you all to come over here and take a piece of paper, and then line up in single file. Here Mr. Meeks. You shall inherit the Earth. Mr. Pitts! Rise above your name." Each boy gets a piece of paper. There is a line of boys and each has a ball and a slip of paper.

"You know what to do Pitts," says Keating. Pitts reads from the slip and then kicks the ball. Keating asks him to do it again with some conviction.

Pitts does, "Oh to struggle against great odds to meet enemies undaunted." Then each boy reads his slip and kicks the ball. As they do so Keating puts on classical music and exhorts the boys to shout out the lines and then kick the balls with meaning.

"Come on Charlie, let it fill your soul," shouts Keating.

"Do indeed be a God," screams Dalton as he pounds the ball. [*The use of the physical seems important in Keating's pedagogy.*]

Scene 22. Neil rushes down the Academy hallway. "Charlie I got the part," he shouts. "I am going to play Puck." He rushes into his room. Todd is there. Neil immediately sits at the typewriter, "OK. I need a letter of permission from my father and Mr. Nolan." Todd tells Neil he is crazy to write the letters himself. Neil laughs and continues to write. "This is great," he says to himself.

Scene 23. The sun is setting. In the distance there is the sound of the bagpipes coming from a solitary piper. The school is silhouetted against the darkening sky. Todd paces back and forth reading what he has written. He rips it up. [*Scene 22-23 shows some of the tensions in the lessons Keating teaches. Neil is alive with the passion of being committed to a dream to become an actor, albeit against his father's wishes. Todd is striving to unlock his voice and step out from the shadow of his brother's reputation. Knox is alive with feelings of love for a girl who seems involved with his father's best friend's son. Each has been called upon to find his own path via difficult journeys.*]

Scene 24. In Keating's classroom Knox rises to read his poem: "To Chris. There is sweetness in her smile. Bright lights shine from her eyes. Life is complete. And heaven is mine just knowing that she's alive." He crumples the paper and dejected walks back to his seat.

"Good effort," says Keating. "A major theme, love, not only in poetry but life." Hopkins is called forward and recites his poem, "The cat sat on the mat." He smiles and sits.

"Congratulations Mr. Hopkins. You're the first poet to have a negative score on the Prichard scale. We are not laughing at you but near you. I don't mind that your poem had a simple theme. Poetry can be about simple things like a cat, or a flower, or rain. Many things have the stuff of revelation in it. Just don't let your poem be ordinary. Now who is next? Mr. Anderson? You are sitting there in agony. Come on step up and we will put you out of your misery."

"I didn't do it," says Todd. "I didn't write a poem."

"Mr. Anderson thinks that everything inside him is worthless. Isn't that right, Todd? That's your worst fear. Well I think you are wrong. I think you have something inside you that is worth a great deal." Keating goes to the board and writes, "I sound my barbaric YAWP over the rooftops of the world. W.W." Keating asks Todd to do a Yawp--a barbaric Yawp. Todd gives a mild Yawp. Keating insists he can do better. Louder. Louder. Louder. Badgered to the limit Todd finally shouts out a yawp. Then Keating asks Todd to think about Uncle Walt's words on the board. Keating has brought Todd forward and as he circles around the stationary boy he tells Todd to close his eyes. "Tell me about the words?" asks Keating.

Todd's eyes are covered by Keating. Todd says, "I close my eyes and this image focused beside me. This sweaty-toothed mad man pounds my brain. His hands reach out and choke me. And all the time he is mumbling. The truth ... the truth is like a blanket that always leaves your feet cold. You push it and stretch it, it will never be enough. You kick at it, beat at it, it will never cover any of us. From the moment we enter crying to the moment we leave dying, it will just cover your face as you wail and cry and scream." The class is in awe of Todd's words as he is. They cheer. Keating says directly to Todd, "Never forget this." [*Keating's pedagogical approach is again demonstrated. Using the* *body and humor Keating moves Todd to seize the moment. In his caring for Todd's voice Keating seems to understand pedagogically Todd's needs, and this is over and above what Todd understands as his own needs. Keating has so much hope and resolve for Todd that he demonstrates his responsibility for Todd to do what it takes for him to be responsible for his own words. And perhaps Todd has faced the monster that has taken his voice by uttering the words he does with Keating's help. Keating leads Todd to the edge. Todd takes the risk and Keating is there for him. The improvisational elements of this encounter illustrates that much of what Keating did here remained hidden, but something powerful happened. If the students, or even Keating himself, were asked what happened they would probably have a difficult time explaining what actually occurred. That is other than the fact that they were moved for a moment.*]

Scene 25. The boys are playing soccer. The music roars. Keating is with them. The energy and passion of the game is there. After the winning goal the boys grab Keating and hoist him upon their shoulders. The sun begins to set. [*This scene seems to demonstrate the growing bonds between teacher and students. Is Keating their champion now?*]

Scene 26. The Dead Poets Society boys light pipes. They sit in the Indian cave. Knox seems distant. The others ask him to join in as Neil enters with an old lamp. He says it will represent the God of the Cave. The body of the lamp is a ceramic of an old man. Dalton begins to play his sax and says, "OK let's start the meeting." Dalton then stands and plays the sax rough and loud. He pauses and says, "Laughing, crying, tumbling, mumbling. Got to do more; got to be more." Then he returns to his harsh sax playing only to stop and say, "Chaos screaming; chaos dreaming. Got to do more; got to be more." Then he breaks into a sweet lament. The contrast is powerful and the boys are drawn to it. When Dalton finishes they clap loudly. Finally, Knox breaks the general talk with, "I can't take it any more. If I don't have Chris I will kill myself." Someone tells him to calm down but Knox says, "That's just my problem. I have been calm all my life. I am going to do something about that. I am going to call her." He bolts from the cave and the boys hurry out after him.

[Dalton's musical poem embodies the tension between confusion and clarity, as well as to act or not to act. The effect on Knox is so strong that he finally acknowledges that he has been called upon to act on his love for Chris. It moves him and he must respond. He must seize the moment.]

Scene 27. The pay telephone awaits as Knox dials. But when Chris answers Knox hangs up. "She's going to hate me. The Danburrys will hate me. My parents will kill me," says Knox. He looks at the boys then says, "You're right. *Carpe diem.*" He dials again. "Even if this kills me." The boys smile. "Hello Chris? Hi. Knox Overstreet." He whispers to the boys she is glad he called. He is invited to a party Friday at the Danburry's. He hangs up and screams with joy. The boys celebrate, but Dalton cautions that it is a party at the Danburry's and that's all. Knox agrees but the point is she was thinking about him. "I only met her once and she is thinking about me. Damn it. It is going to happen guys. She is going to be mine." He runs up the stairs as the boys shout after him, " *Carpe ... carpe ... carpe ....*"

Scene 28. In the Academy courtyard Keating has his boys lined up watching three of the class walk around the square. Before long they are walking in line and in step. "There it is," says Keating. In a window high above the courtyard Mr. Nolan peers down at the scene. The three boys are now marching in unison as the others clap. Keating stops the boys. He tells the boys to notice how everyone starts off with his own stride, but quickly gets in step. Keating wishes to stress how quickly conformity takes over. Despite Keating suggesting that everyone needs some form of acceptance, as is illustrated by boys clapping together in harmony, he still insists there is also a need to trust one's beliefs as being different and unique. Keating then makes reference to Robert Frost saying, "Two roads diverge in the woods and I choose the one less travelled by and that has made all the difference." He asks the boys to find his own distinctive walk, and to do so with his own pace, and with his own stride. There should not be any sense of performance. The boys begin to walk again. That is all except Dalton. When Keating asks Dalton about his non-walking Dalton says he is exercising his right not to walk. "Thanks for illustrating my point, Mr. Dalton." [*Again Keating's lesson involves the use of the body. He has his students out of their desks and out of their classroom. Keating uses walking to illustrate the tension between conformity and non-conformity. But it is important to note that Keating also attempts to stress to the students that to be different is not necessarily a question of performance. In fact being different can involve being not different. Dalton demonstrates that point and Keating points that out to the class.*]

Scene 29. Neil sees Todd outside the Academy sitting on a walkway. When questioned by Neil, Todd says it is his birthday. Neil asks what he got as a present. Todd says he got the desk set sitting on his lap, but it is also the same thing he got last year.

Neil wonders, "Maybe they thought you needed another one."

"Maybe they weren't thinking at all," says Todd. "Funny thing about this is I didn't even like it the first time."

Neil suggests Todd is underestimating the value of the desk set. "Especially when one could have a desk set as wonderful as this. If I would buy a desk set twice, it would be this one," says Neil. "This one seems rather aerodynamic," suggests Neil. He looks over the edge of the walkway. "Perhaps this desk set wants to fly." Neil hands it to Todd. Todd then smiles and tosses the set over the catwalk to the ground below. Neil says, "Oh my. Not to worry you will get another one next year." The boys laugh. [*A contrast is evident between Todd's parents and Neil's parents. One set seems to care so much they suffocate their son, and the other pair seems to care so little they send the same present for consecutive birthdays. As a response Neil offers Todd a way to respond.*]

Scene 30. In the cave the boys huddle together. Suddenly the small talk is interrupted by the giggle of girls. Two girls, Gloria and Trish, enter the cave with Dalton. It is Friday night and time to party announces Dalton. After introducing the girls Dalton also announces that his new name is Nuwanda. He takes lipstick from the girls and marks his face.

At the Danburry's Knox enters as a party scene unfolds around him. The music is loud. Chris grabs him. She asks if he brought anyone. He hasn't. She tells him to make himself at home and she dashes off upstairs. A girl and a boy sit on the couch. They are engaged in a passionate kiss. Knox watches. The music seems louder. Knox notices Chris. She is dancing with Chet. Knox goes to the kitchen to get a drink, but two football players mistake him for Mutt Sanders' brother. They refuse to let Knox go until he has several drinks. Despite his claims that he is no relation to Mutt Sanders, Knox is forced to drink several toasts to his "new" brother.

At the cave the boys and two girls sit huddled together. Dalton, now Nuwanda, recites some Shakespearean sonnets. The girls admire the verses assuming he wrote them. Dalton does not correct the mis-impression.

At the party Knox is becoming intoxicated. The party takes a slower turn. Couples are entwined. Knox comes to rest on the couch. He looks down and sees Chris sleeping. Chet is sitting across the room with his back to them. Knox whispers to himself,"*Carpe diem.*" He reaches out and strokes Chris' hair. To the music "Hey Little Girl" Knox kisses Chris on the forehead. One of Chet's buddies sees Knox and shouts to Chet, "Hey it is Mutt Sanders' brother. He is feeling up your girl." Chris awakens with a start and gets up as Chet rushes over to Knox and punches him in the nose. Chris pulls Chet off Knox who is bleeding. "Next time I see you, you die," shouts Chet.

At the cave the boys smoke and the girls drink from a mickey. The girls ask the boys if they miss having girls around. "It is part of what makes this club," responds Dalton. Then he announces he has published an article in the school newspaper under the name Dead Poets Society. The boys are shocked. But Dalton insists as a proofreader he was able to slip it in without anyone noticing. The boys are fearful that they will now be discovered. Dalton says they must not just seem to play around at doing something adventurous, but actually do something. [***The boys continue to push at the boundaries of their worlds by exploring the possibilities of new horizons of those very worlds. Dalton*** *seems to be most committed in his desire to assume the quest to seize the moment. He also seems to have taken on the responsibility, like Neil, to lead by example.*]

Scene 31. Mr. Nolan races into the great hall flanked by several staff members. The gathered boys stand as the administration group enters. Nolan takes the speaker's stand and barks, "Sit. In this week's issue of the *Welton Annual* there appears a profane and unauthorized article. Rather than spend my valuable time ferreting out the guilty persons, and let me assure you I will find them, I am asking any and all students who know anything at all about the article to stand here and now. Whoever the guilty persons are this is your only chance to advance in order to avoid expulsion from this school." During the speech the the DPS boys' faces look tense. Mr. Nolan glares out at the end of his speech. Suddenly there is a ringing. Nolan, like the others, looks around confused. Dalton stands with a ringing phone in his hand.

Dalton says, "Hello. Hello. Welton Academy. Yes, he is. Yes, a moment. Mr. Nolan it's for you. It's God. He says we should have girls at Welton." The assembled boys roar as Dalton offers the receiver to Nolan. [*Nolan asks for those responsible for the penned challenge to Welton's authority. But in a most insightful way Dalton reveals the Achilles Heel of authority, humor. He seems to have learned that lesson well from Keating. But what of the timing and the consequences?*]

Scene 32. In Nolan's office behind the closed doors Dalton is seated. "Wipe that smirk off your face. If you think Mr. Dalton you are the first to try and get thrown out of this school think again. Others have had similar notions and have failed just as surely as you will fail. Assume the position." Dalton stands and bends over. A huge wooden spanking paddle riddled with holes is brought out. Nolan rolls up his selves then strikes Dalton as Dalton is forced to count. Nolan senses the defiance is still there in Knox's voice and body. Surprised and challenged he paddles Knox harder. "I want Dead Poets Society. I want names," shouts Nolan.

In the hall Dalton's comrades are waiting. At last Dalton appears. He is in pain. The boys let him pass. As he enters his room he says, "I am to turn everybody in and apologize to the school and all will be forgiven."

"What are you going to do Charlie? " asks Neil through the door.

Dalton opens his room door smiles and says, "Damn it, the name is Nuwanda." He shuts the door. [*The physical punishment by the Headmaster reveals the system's inability to counter the challenge that Dalton has offered. Is the pen indeed mightier than the sword (or paddle)? What is remarkable though is Dalton's resolve; his resolve seems even greater after he faces his punishment. He seems even more defiant and gives the impression that he cannot be beaten into compliance. Resistance seems to have become Dalton's signature*.]

Scene 33. McAllister and Keating are talking as Nolan enters. He asks Keating for a moment of his time. They walk to the adjoining classroom.

"This is my first classroom, John. Did you know that?" asks Nolan as he walks about.

"I didn't know you taught, Mr. Nolan."

"English. Oh yes, long before your time. It was hard giving it up I can tell you. I am hearing rumors, John, about some unorthodox teaching methods in your classroom. I am not saying they have anything to do with the Dalton boy's outburst, but I don't think I have to warn you that boys this age are very impressionable."

"Well your reprimand made quite the impression I am sure," says Keating. Nolan asks about the lesson in the courtyard. Keating responds that it was to prove a point about the dangers of conformity.

Nolan comments, "But John the curriculum here is set. It is proven. It works. If you question it, what is preventing them from doing the same thing?"

"But I thought the point of education was to learn to think for yourself."

"At these boys' ages, not on your life. Tradition, John. Discipline. Prepare them for college and the rest will take care of itself." He pats Keating on the arm and leaves.

Keating is left standing alone. [*Nolan calls for the honoring of Welton's educative tradition. Teaching is a bounded discipline that should stress sequential training and feature a need for law and order as instilled within a set curriculum. Nolan insists his teachers must not actively inspire the students to challenge the time honored ways utilized at Welton. But in establishing the boundaries for what constitutes the proper educative relation Nolan seems to dwell on the negation. That is he stresses the "do nots." He defines what it is to be irresponsible, unreliable, and incompetent with respect to an educative relation with others. In the end Nolan, as the school authority, warns Keating much like Dalton has been warned.*]

Scene 34. In the common room the Dead Poets Society boys are gathered about. Dalton is relating the story of his punishment. Keating enters. He says to Dalton, "A pretty lame stunt you pulled today."

"You're siding with Mr. Nolan? What about *Carpe diem* and sucking the marrow of life?" responds Dalton surprised at not being praised by Keating.

"Sucking the marrow out of life doesn't mean choking on the bone. There is a time for daring and a time for caution. A wise man understands what is called for."

Dalton says, "But I thought you would like that."

"No. You being expelled from school is not daring to me, it is stupid. You will miss some golden opportunities."

"Yes like what?"

"Like, if nothing else, the opportunity to attend my classes. Got it Ace?"

"Aye Aye Captain," responds Dalton.

"Keep your heads about you.That goes for the lot of you."

"Yes Captain, yes Captain," is their response.

As Keating is about to leave he turns and says, "A phone call from God. If it were collect that would have been daring." The boys laugh. [*This is another powerful scene where Keating uses humor as an opportunity to confirm the difference between resistance* *and rebellion, and how one or the other can simply be a question of time and place. Knowing what to do, or how to do it, is important, but knowing when to act tactfully is what makes situations, events, and relations special. Indeed, it is what makes some moments pedagogic. In coming to see the boys and in doing so in a way that is creative and responsible, Keating again demonstrates how he cares for them. He corrects, redirects and offers hope in doing so. He indicates that it is possible to stand up for something without putting down something else.*]

Scene 35. The Academy building is silhouetted and the bell tolls. Neil bikes away from the school. He enters a rehearsal hall. On the stage the actors are blocking a scene. Neil smiles.

Scene 36. At the Academy the boys scurry about. It is meal time. Neil comes in against the flow and asks the boys to save some food for him. He walks down the hall reciting Puck's lines and opens his dorm door.

"Father!"

"Neil."

"Before you say anything, ..." says Neil as he is cut off by his father hammering the desk.

"Please don't talk back to me. It is bad enough that you have wasted your time with this absurd acting business. But you deliberately deceived me. How did you expect to get away with it? Who put you up to it? Was it this new man ... Keating?"

"No. Nobody. I wanted to surprise you .... I have all A's ..."

Neil's father interrupts. "You made a liar out of me Neil." Mr. Perry tells Neil he had to deny to people in town that his son was acting in the local play. "Not Neil. In a play? No way. Now tomorrow you go to them and tell them that you are quitting."

Neil protests that he has a significant part and the performance begins tomorrow night. But his father is adamant.

"I don't care if the world comes to an end tomorrow night you are through with that play." The two stand face to face. "Is that clear?" bellows Neil's father.

"Yes sir."

As Mr. Perry leaves he says, "I made a great many sacrifices to get you here Neil and you will not let me down." [*Neil's father seems to be someone who Keating would describe as living a life of quiet desperation. The tension between Neil and his father is strong and deep. Neil's father seems to have co-opted the notion of being responsible by suggesting that anything Neil does without sanction is irresponsible. Is there a hint of foreshadowing in Mr. Perry's wish for the world to come to an end?*]

Scene 37. At his desk, beside a photo of a woman, Keating writes a note. The music is soft. There is a knock at the door and Neil enters. Neil asks to speak. Keating welcomes the opportunity. After some talk about how small the room is Neil says of the photo, "She is pretty."

"She is in London. Makes it a little difficult."

Neil asks, "How can you stand it?"

"Stand what?" asks Keating.

"You can go anywhere. Do anything. How can you stand being here?"

"I love teaching. I don't want to be anywhere else."

Neil then confides in Keating that his father refuses to let him act in tomorrow's opening of the play. Neil's family is not rich like Dalton's and his father has made many sacrifices to get Neil into Welton. Neil is made to be responsible for that. But in the process of accepting his desires Neil's father never asks Neil what he wanted.

Keating says, "Have you ever told your father just what you told me? About the passion for acting. Have you ever shown him that?"

"No. I cannot."

"Why?"

"I cannot talk to him this way," says Neil.

"Then you are acting for him too. You are playing the part of the dutiful son. I know this sounds impossible, but you have to talk to him. Show him who you are. What you are. Tell him who you are and what your heart is about."

"I know what he will say. He will tell me acting is a whim and I should forget it. They are counting on me. I should put it out of my mind for my own good."

Keating tells Neil he is not "an indentured servant." Neil must go to his father and tell him acting is not a whim. He must prove it to him. Show him the passion and if he still doesn't believe then Neil will be out of school. Then he can do anything he wishes. Neil has a few tears. The play is tomorrow but Keating insists Neil must talk to his father before then. Neil says he feels trapped. [*Keating tries to describe to Neil his love of teaching as a sense of vocation. The element of* in loco parentis *seems very strong in this scene. Acting as a parent might, Keating tells Neil he must face his dream and demonstrate his passion for his chosen path. For Keating his choice was difficult. He had to leave his romantic interest behind in England. Is the act of choosing to become an actor similar? Neil must stand up in a mature and responsible way to that which he wants to become. He must respond in a way that is self-critical and open. In doing so Neil must also face his father's objections. It is in this exchange of dreams that Keating seems very insightful when he points out that Neil is acting a part every moment he refuses to acknowledge his true interest.*]

Scene 38. The Academy grounds are snow covered. The side door opens and Knox grabs a bike. He peddles through the snow. Next Knox appears in the busy hallway of the local school. With flowers in his hand, Knox looks over the throng of students. Chris is at her locker when Knox approaches. Her friends clear out when they see Knox.

"Knox. What are you doing here?" Knox offers her the flowers, an apology for his party behavior, and a poem. She bolts down the hall. He follows. "Don't you know if Chet finds you here he will kill you," she says. Knox says he doesn't care because he loves her. He acted like a jerk, and asks her to accept the flowers.

"Please, please," implores Knox.

"No I can't. I have to go to class. Forget it." She goes down the hall into a classroom full of students. "I don't believe this," Chris says as everyone looks up when Knox rushes in after her.

"All I am asking is you hear this." He reads his poem, "The heavens made a girl named Chris, with hair and skin of gold, to touch her would be paradise." A football buddy of Chet's notices Knox and calls out. Chris buries her head in her hands as Knox flees. [*In contrast to Neil's hesitation to act Knox throws caution to the wind. Again against tremendous odds he makes a stand. He takes the opportunity and faces the challenge of winning what he desires.*]

Scene 39. In the Academy's kitchen Knox sneaks in and steals a piece of toast as he scurries through to his room. The stairs are crowded with boys. The bells are ringing. Knox meets the DPS group. They ask what happened. He reads his poem for Chris to them. "What did she say?" they ask. Knox says she said nothing but that doesn't mean anything because he did it.

Scene 40. In his classroom Keating approaches Neil who sits alone. He asks how Neil's talk with his father went. Neil says his father does not like the idea of him being in the play, but agreed to Neil finishing the play. "I think he is going to let me stay with acting," says Neil. Keating asks Neil if he told his father what he told him about his passion for acting. Neil says his father will be gone four days, and he will probably miss the entire performance. But if he keeps his grades up there should be no problem. Neil thanks Keating for listening to him. As Neil leaves Keating's face reveals his suspicions and concerns about Neil's story. [*This is a pivotal scene. Is Keating being over-sensitive to Neil's subjective anguish by not pressuring Neil about how committed he is to his disclosures to his father? Or is Keating simply opening the space for Neil to make the commitment on his own terms? Is Keating being irresponsible as a teacher authorized to act as if a parent? Certainly he is not acting as Neil's father would. He knows what Neil's* *father's wishes are in this regard. And yet is Keating acting how Neil's father should be acting? Keating seems to know more about Neil than Mr. Perry does. Has Neil authorized Keating to engage in a relationship that is different than that he has with his father?*]

Scene 41. In the boys washroom Dalton has painted a huge red lightning bolt on his chest claiming it is an Indian warrior symbol which makes him feel potent. As the DPS boys spill into the hall and come down the stairs to go to the play they see Chris at the door. Knox tells the others to go on. He tells Chris she should not be at his school. She says he came to her school to embarrass her and make a fool of her so why can't she come to his school? Knox slowly ushers her outside. Chris tells Knox to stop all this "love" stuff. Knox refuses and says he loves her. Keating calls from his car offering Knox a ride to Neil's play, but Knox says he will walk. Chris insists she could care less about Knox. But Knox counters by asking why she came to him. Chris indicates she is warning him about Chet. Then she tries to walk away, but Knox asks her to go to the play. Chet doesn't go to plays and so Chris is intrigued by the suggestion. Knox begs for a chance. He pledges on his Dead Poets' honor that if she comes with him to the play and still wants to have him leave her alone after that he will. "Dead Poets' honor," he pledges. She asks about the Dead Poets' pledge.

"My word," says Knox.

"You are so infuriating," says Chris. She begins to walk away then motions Knox to join her. They walk together as the snow falls. [*It seems that Knox's passion and his desire to seize the moment in a witty and resourceful manner creates an opportunity for success.*]

Scene 42. At the theatre the audience gathers. As the play begins Neil appears as Puck. His friends clap heartily. Later during the performance Knox whispers to Keating, "He is good, really good." Keating gives a thumbs up. Neil's performance moves the audience throughout to laugh and to wonder. Nearing the play's end Neil is backstage looking out at the audience. He notices that his father has slipped into the back of the theatre. Neil looks concerned. He is called back to attend to his cue. He moves to the stage. Chris is engrossed in the play and Knox engrossed with Chris. Knox takes her hand in his. Neil delivers the final soliloquy by Puck. He speaks almost directly to his boiling father at the back of the hall. When he finishes the audience erupts. A standing ovation. Back stage there is turmoil. Neil is pushed forward to take a bow with the other actors. The curtain closes. Backstage everyone is congratulating Neil on his performance. Mr. Perry asks the stage director to get Neil. Neil moves to the curtain and the theatre is almost empty except for his father standing at the back. Neil's father, with Neil in tow, pushes through the crowd in a rough manner. The crowd tries to congratulate Neil. Keating tells Neil "You have the gift. What a performance. You left even me speechless." By this time Mr. Perry is at the car staring back at Neil and Keating. He strides back to tell Keating to stay away from his son and tells Neil to get to the car. Dalton asks Mr. Perry to relax a little. But Mr. Perry returns furiously to the car and with Neil looking out the window he speeds off. Keating looks on. The DPS boys ask if they might walk back to the Academy. Keating nods. He stands there for some long time looking out at the night.His face is distorted with several emotions. [*The tension is obvious. Who is responsible for Neil's actions? Neil? Mr. Perry? Mr. Keating?*]

Scene 43. Mrs. Perry paces while smoking a cigarette. Neil and his father enter the living room. There is silence as Neil sits and his father stands over him. Mr. Perry tells Neil he is not going to ruin his life. Neil will be withdrawn from Welton tomorrow. He will be put in a military school then go on to Harvard and he will become a doctor. Neil looks at his mother to say something. She cannot meet his eyes and turns away. Mr. Perry cannot understand how Neil can turn from the opportunities he could not dream of when he was a young man. Mr. Perry is not going to let Neil throw it all away. Neil tries to speak, but he cannot. Mr. Perry insists that there will be no more of this acting business. There is silence. "What?" demands Neil's father as Neil tries to speak.

"Nothing," says Neil. He sits. His father stands over him and then leaves. "It was really good, really good," whispers Neil. His mother approaches from behind and tells Neil to get some sleep. She leaves. Neil sits alone.

In the Perry's bedroom Mr. Perry disrobes and gets into bed with his wife. His slippers are aligned beside the bed. The light goes out. Mrs. Perry sobs softly. "It will be fine," comforts Mr. Perry.

Neil's pyjamas are neatly laid out on his bed. Neil undresses in the shadows. Puck's crown of twigs is on the dresser. The music is somber. Neil softly touches the crown and moves to the bedroom window and opens it. He breathes in the cold air. He puts on his crown, closes his eyes, and bows his head to his bare chest.

Next there is a turning door knob and the sight of bare feet walking lightly on the floor. Neil goes down the stairs. A picture of the Red Boy of Gainsborough is just above the head of the sleeping Mr. Perry.

There is a key in Neil's hands. The key opens a desk drawer in the study. A cloth-wrapped gun is put on the desk top by Neil. Neil is seated at the desk. His parents sleep upstairs. Suddenly Mr. Perry is startled awake. He puts on the light. He puts on his robe and slippers and going to Neil's door he knocks and enters. The crown of thorns is on the open window ledge. Mr. Perry runs from the room. Mrs. Perry is up and asks what is going on. Mr. Perry rushes past her and down the stairs. He enters the study and sees the gun on the floor beside the extended arm of his son reaching out from behind the desk. In slow motion Neil's father leaps to his son's side. Mr. Perry screams, "No." Neil's mother enters and sees her dead son. She screams."Oh my God," says Mr. Perry. "My son!"

"He is alright," screams Neil's mother over and over. Both parents are now huddled together sobbing. [*The death of a child is the ultimate tragedy for parents. When the death is self-induced the questions that remain often call upon those left to face themselves in a most existential way. But will this be the case with the Perrys?*]

Scene 44. Todd is sleeping when he suddenly sees Knox is standing over him. The DPS boys are in the doorway. "It's Neil," says Knox. "Neil's dead."

The frozen river and the snow covered forest are silent. The DPS boys walk though the snow. Todd stops. He looks around and says, "It is so beautiful." Then he collapses physically ill. He cries, "It was his father who did it. Neil never would have done it." The boys try to comfort Todd, but he bolts free and runs slipping and sliding to the frozen lake's edge. The music is melancholy. Dalton tells the others to stand back and they watch Todd run off. [*Todd seldom wastes words and he gets right to the heart of what everyone is thinking: who is responsible?*]

Scene 45. Keating is in his dark and empty classroom. He gets up from the desk where he was sitting. He walks down the row stopping at Neil's desk. He touches it. He opens the desk top. There is the book of verse of the Dead Poets Society. He opens to the first page: "I went to the woods because I/wanted to live deliberately/I wanted to live deep and suck/out all the marrow of life!/To put to rent all that was not life./And not, when I came to die, discover/that I had not lived. H.D.T."

Keating cries. He covers his eyes. He closes the text. [*Teachers are authorized to be teachers by that which constantly prompts them to face the reflective questioning of what they do with their students. This doubting and this questioning ("Did I do the right thing?") is what brings a teacher again and again to face the questions of responsibility, reliability, and competence. This questioning is the life-blood of pedagogy. This personal-professional sense of doubting is what asks a teacher if he or she did the right thing. The death of a student brings on, in that most profound way possible, the questioning of a teacher's personal-professional teaching self.*]

Scene 46. The Academy boys are singing in the meeting hall. Nolan approaches the podium and says, "The death of Neil Perry is a tragedy. He was a fine student. One of Welton's best. He will be missed. We have contacted each of your parents to explain the situation and naturally they are all quite concerned. At the request of Neil's family I intend to conduct a thorough inquiry into this matter. Your complete cooperation is expected."

Scene 47. The remaining DPS boys sit in a secluded place. "You told him about the meeting?" says Dalton.

"Twice."

"Cameron is a fink," says Dalton. "He's in Nolan's office right now finking. Think about it. The Board of Directors, the Trustees, and Mr. Nolan. You think for one moment they're going to let this thing blow over. Schools go down because of things like this. They need a scapegoat."

At that moment Cameron comes around the corner and asks, "What's going on guys?"

Dalton says explicitly, "You finked didn't you Cameron?"

"Finked? I don't know what the hell you're talking about," says Cameron defensively.

"Nolan. Everything about the Club is what I am talking about."

"In case you haven't heard Dalton there is something called the honor code at this school. Alright. If a teacher asks you a question you tell the truth or you're expelled," counters Cameron. Dalton tries to get at Cameron but the others hold him back. "If you guys are smart you will do exactly what I did and cooperate. They are not after us. We are the victims. Us and Neil."

"What does that mean? Who are they after?" asks Dalton.

"Mr. Keating. Of course. The Captain himself," says Cameron. "You guys didn't think he could avoid responsibility did you?"

Dalton asks, "Mr. Keating? Responsible for Neil? Is that what they are saying?"

Cameron says, "Well who else do you think? You dumb ass! The Administration? Mr. Perry? Mr. Keating put us up to all this crap, didn't he? If it wasn't for Mr. Keating

Neil would be cozy up in his room right now studying chemistry dreaming of being called doctor."

Todd charges, "That's not true and you know that. He didn't put us up to anything. And Neil loved acting."

Cameron says, "Believe what you want, but let Keating fry. Why ruin our lives?"

Dalton smashes Cameron hard in the face. The group grabs Dalton. Cameron, with blood streaming from his nose, says, "You just signed your expulsion papers Nuwanda. And if the rest of you were smart you would do exactly what I did. They know everything anyway. You can't save Keating, but you can save yourself." Cameron leaves. The other boys are left standing there. [*Among the boys the questioning of responsibility is rampant. Cameron speaks from a discourse with firm boundaries. Echoing Nolan, he describes Keating as the source, and the cause of the Neil Perry tragedy and, therefore, Keating is responsibly accountable. Dalton attempts to say otherwise, as does Todd, but both seem to realize the power of the system that they and Keating must eventually be responsible to will demand at least the appearance of justice. A system of justice that will bring tremendous pressure to bear as it seeks to re-establish its power of control over disorder.*]

Scene 48. From an upper window to the courtyard below two figures can be seen walking. Knox is at the upper window of the dorm looking out. "Knox Overstreet" booms Hager's voice as Meeks returns to his room and Knox is next to be led to be questioned. Knox opens his door and walks down the hall. Todd opens his door and he and Knox exchange smiles. Knox is met at the end of the hall by Hager who escorts him to the office. Todd leaves his room and walks across the hall to Meeks' door.

"Meeks?"

"Go away. I have to study."

Todd moves closer to the door. "What happened to Nuwanda?"

"He is out."

"What did you tell them?" asks Todd.

"Nothing they didn't already know," says Meeks.

"Todd Anderson," booms Hager. Todd is led up the stairs. The door opens and Todd walks into Nolan's office. His mother and father are there. The door closes. He is told to sit.

"Mr. Anderson I think we pretty well put together what happened here. Do you admit to being a part of this Dead Poets Society?"

"Answer him," demands Todd's father.

"Yes sir."

"I have here a detailed description of what occurred at your meetings. It describes how your teacher, Mr. Keating, encouraged you boys to organize and he used it as a source of inspiration for reckless and self-indulgent behavior. It describes how Mr. Keating both in and out of the classroom encouraged Mr. Perry to have the obsession with acting when he knew all along it was against the explicit orders of Neil's parents. It was Mr. Keating's blatant abuse of his position as a teacher which led directly to Neil Perry's death."

Todd is again speechless. Todd's father hands him the document. "Read that document carefully ... very carefully," says Nolan. On the document there are already four names signed--Meeks, Pitts, Overstreet, and Cameron. There is one spot left.

"If you don't have anything to add or amend sign it." Todd is offered the pen.

"What happens to Mr. Keating?" asks Todd.

"I have had enough. Sign the paper Todd," demands his father. The pen is poised. [*The dominant question in such a tragedy seems to be who is educationally and morally responsible? In the context of Nolan's inquiry the question of who is responsible actually means who has been irresponsible and, therefore, accountable, guilty, and expendable. The direct questioning of Keating's competence and reliability by Nolan are linked to Keating's seemingly rampant irresponsibility regarding his position of authority over the students. Nolan seems to want to claim that Keating has no concept of the needs or wants of his* *students. If he did then he would not have veered from the set curriculum. Nolan's educational experience indicates that students only want that which will get them into college. Thinking can come later. It is Nolan's understanding that is is from that responsible stance that Keating has veered. He must be held accountable for his deviancy.*]

Scene 49. The snow surrounds the Academy. Winter's death grip is firm. A group of boys walk through the snow as McAllister strolls behind conducting a Latin lesson. He stops and looks high to the upper levels and in a window he sees Keating. He slowly lifts his hand in a gesture of goodwill. Keating acknowledges with a small wave. McAllister returns to the procession. Keating looks out the window. He smiles. Then Keating takes his bag.

Nolan enters Keating's former classroom. The boys stand. "Sit," Nolan barks. "I will be teaching this class through exams until we find a permanent English teacher during break." Todd squirms. Nolan asks, "Who will tell me where we are in the Prichard textbook? Mr. Anderson?"

"In the Prichard text ..." Todd pauses.

Nolan cannot wait. "Kindly inform me Mr. Cameron."

"We skipped around sir. We covered the Romantics and some chapters on post-civil war literature."

"What about the realists?"

"I believe we skipped most of that sir."

Nolan asks, "Alright then we will start over. What is poetry?" A knock at the door. It is Keating.

"I came for my personal things. Shall I come back after class?"

"Get them now Mr. Keating," insists Nolan. Keating moves to the office attached to the classroom. Nolan tells the boys to turn to page 21 of the introduction.

"Mr. Cameron read aloud the excellent essay of Prichard 'Understanding Poetry'."

Keating enters the office. Cameron says that page was ripped out. Nolan tells him to get another book. "They were all ripped out sir."

Nolan laughs, "What do you mean they were all ripped out?"

"Sir, we...."

"Never mind," says Nolan as he slaps his text on Cameron's desk. "Read." Keating puts on his scarf. Cameron reads the Prichard essay. Keating looks out from the office. Todd looks in at Keating. Keating leaves the office. He walks by Todd's desk. Although Todd seems like he wants to talk he cannot bring himself to do so. Keating gets to the end of the last row and just before opening the door Todd jumps up and says, "Mr. Keating they made us sign it."

"Quiet," demands Nolan.

"Believe me it's true," shouts Todd defying Nolan.

"I do believe you," says Keating softly.

Nolan charges at Todd and screams at him to sit down. In protest Todd says, "But it wasn't his fault."

"One more outburst from you or anyone and you are out of this school," threatens Nolan. To Keating he says, "Leave Mr. Keating." Todd sits down dejected. "I said leave Mr. Keating." Nolan looks fierce. Keating turns to leave.

Todd's pained face foretells his jumping up again. This time Todd jumps onto his desk. "Captain, My Captain," says Todd.

"Mr. Anderson," shouts Nolan. "Do you hear me? Sit down." Keating turns and acknowledges Todd's strength with a look. Dalton also steps up on his desk, "Oh Captain, My Captain," he echoes.

"Mr. Overstreet! I warn you," shouts Nolan. But as he does Meeks and Pitts and several other boys start to step up on their desks. Nolan continues to shout. The boys look down at Keating by the door. Keating looks up at half the class standing on their desks. The music is strong. The boys' faces beam. Todd and Keating exchange glances.

"Thank you boys," says Keating. "Thank you."

Todd stands even taller. The credits begin. [*In the end it is Todd who makes the poetic gesture. He stands up for something, for somebody, for himself. His words are compressed, direct, and metaphoric. He has consciously chosen to act. In doing so he demonstrates with passion Keating's lessons taught and learned. He has come to understand, albeit in tragic circumstances, that the world is a place where hopes and dreams make one's life extra-ordinary. Finally, Todd shows a way for others to seize the teachable moment.*]

Reviewing the reading:

Optimism and pessimism are pedagogic bedfellows

Keating, much like Escalante, has tremendous pedagogic gifts. He has a strong sense of vocation, a love and caring for his students, an interpretive intelligence, a sense of humor and vitality, as well as a passion for exploring the world. Keating also offers his students a sense of hope when all seems lost. He has a strong ability to understand the pedagogical needs of his students.

> We can often tell whether a teacher is real or fake by the way that person stylizes what he or she teaches. Indeed a fake is incapable of stylizing what he or she does not embody in the first place. ... A real English teacher tends not only to love reading, writing, and carrying poetry under one arm during coffee break; a real English teacher cannot help but poetize the world--that is, think deeply about human experience through the incantative power of words. (van Manen, 1986, pp. 45-46)

Scenes from the film narrative show Keating to be pedagogically authentic in his attentiveness to the discipline that calls him. Using the power of his discipline and a teaching giftedness, Keating is able to engage in a special, personal, and two-way intentional relationship with his students.

Keating's relationship with his students and with his discipline is primarily revealed through a contrast of intentions and styles evident in *Dead Poets Society*. Two contrasting authoritative styles of educating are at work in the film. One style suggests an approach to education that honors all the traditions enshrined by Welton Academy. This style privileges the desire for obedience, dependence, and authority. The other stylistic approach to educating, as modeled by Keating, offers to the student, via a decreasing sense of dependency upon the teacher, a way to move toward emancipatory self-exploration, and self-responsibility.

Pedagogical authority defines both the nature of the charge (calling) of the pedagogue and of the pedagogical relation. This is what the world sees when a teacher acts on behalf of the student by referring to a moral responsibility he or she has for the good and development of the students. But this responsibility is also easily betrayed, corrupted, or forgotten. We see in *Dead Poets Society* through the contrasting styles of Keating and Nolan two distinct poles in the understanding of what constitutes pedagogical authority as well as a deeper sense of an optimistic and pessimistic vision of life.

Nolan in his dark pessimistic vision of the world decides he must be a complete caretaker for the students under his charge. He believes the sanction of the boys' parents is to enforce tough discipline over their children, to exert his will over the children's desires, and if necessary to control with threat, by fear, or through punishment. Of course, all of these manifestations of control are advanced as being in the best interests of Welton's students. As such, Nolan's influence makes little attempt to hide his desire for domination and control. In fact, his way of being is enshrines at Welton.

In contrast, there is the much more optimistic style and foundationally humane vision of Keating. Self-identity is a key to Keating's pedagogic stance. His pedagogical authority is really understood as a designation of moral service. Thus Keating exhorts his students to "seize the day." This command-plea may seem like a rather blatantly hedonistic approach to life, but the film narrative shows that each student at Welton is being pulled back unmercifully by the demands of the traditions of a past that rules their lives. All the while these same students are relentlessly made to project themselves forward in time and space to a future their parents have manufactured for them. The only time and space these students can have some control over is the present. Keating models an optimistic way for his students to embrace the present. If they can do this, then suddenly both the past and future appear as interpretive possibilities as opposed to dogmatic givens.

These questions of influence over a student, and the subsequent questions of responsibility for that influence, are based upon an awareness of what constitutes a teacher's authority. This tension stands out in the narrative and interruptions of *Dead Poets Society*. And it is a tension that leads to the question: how do we make children into adults? How might a teacher be with his or her students in a way that is responsive to their need to make themselves, and yet responsible to the expectations and norms of the larger collective? Keating, Nolan, and Mr. Perry all provide models of possible ways to be authoritatively responsible for a child or student. And if responsibility towards a student (child) confronts a teacher or parent with choices and decisions and, therefore, the teacher and parent is required to act in ways that the student and child can recognize as an image of a mature adult, then what does Neil see when he looks at Nolan, his father, and Keating?

The film narrative shows Nolan to be an advocate of an instrumental, control oriented, input-output, pessimistically-visioned ideological system of education. In such a system Neil's role as student is formulated, bounded, and prescribed. He is required to be accountable to the template of the perfect student. In turn, Mr. Perry is portrayed as an adult "living a life of quiet desperation." Mr. Perry's vision for his son only requires Neil to execute and achieve. But we feel this vision for Neil is actually compensatory for Mr. Perry's self-defined failures. And Keating, on the other hand, is shown meeting Neil in his present dependency of the norms that oppress Neil. That is, Keating as an adult assumes a responsibility to represent the norms of adulthood as optimistically as he can believe them to be. In being an adult, and an influential adult, Keating also understands the need to create a space for Neil's freedom to move toward self-responsibility. But in creating a space for freedom with which Neil is able to face and perhaps defy societal norms, if and when it becomes necessary, the haunting question remains: is there any question that a teacher is morally responsible for whatever happens to a student in his care? Is Keating responsible for Neil's actions? Is Mr. Nolan? Is Mr. Perry? Is Neil himself?

READING TWO: *Dead Poets Society* as a multi-interpreted text

> The teacher who inspired Robin Williams' portrayal of an instructor in the movie *Dead Poets Society* has been dismissed by his prestigious school in Beverly Hills, Mich. John Campbell said he was told this month that his contract with Detroit County Day School won't be renewed. He's been with the school for 28 years. "I don't fit their corporate image," said Campbell, 55, who taught history, government and English to Williams when the actor was growing up. "I have been for a long time very unconventional." A statement from the school said the decision came after years of reprimands. (*The Edmonton Journal*, July 24, 1991.)

This reading offers a summary of cinematographic reviews of the film, *Dead Poets Society*. This second reading is an attempt to flesh out some themes in the cinematographic reviews of the film. These themes could be possible openings to explore the meaning and significance of the educative relations presented in the film.

First and foremost, *Dead Poets Society* is cited by many film reviewers as an educationally insightful and commercially inspirational film. In this regard the film's portrayal of one teacher's passionate devotion to his students and subject discipline is honored. The teacher's devotion is so embodied in his way of being that he infectiously inspires his students to begin a journey of self-discovery and self-making. As a result of the teacher's influence many lives are forever changed. With this reviewer focus on the teacher, Keating's pedagogic style is cited by several critics who suggest his style might be equatable to what could be called "good" teaching.

> Williams ... plays an English teacher at a boy's prep school in 1959; his infectious devotion to literature inspires his students with a love of real learning. ... Two scenes are excellent, one in front of a trophy case, and one during the first class where Williams tells his students to tear out the preface to a poetry textbook. In these and other scenes, Williams puts ... his verbal acuity entirely at the service of literature ... Thoreau, Whitman, Byron--he brings them alive for his students again by underplaying his own power.
>
> Of course, all his favorite poets are romantics ... and the romanticism works--with reference to jazz, the beat generation, the coming '60s deluge--as a partly successful satire on realism. Blunting the satirical edge are soap opera conventions common to school films: overdone teenage rebellion, adult insensitivity, crises,

> tragedy, and final bittersweet triumph. ... Despite faults, I welcome *Dead Poets Society* after too many years of teachers being trashed in film. ... In the last year, *Stand and Deliver*, *Lean On Me*, and *Dead Poets Society* mark the shift in image. Robin Williams might get an Oscar nomination for his work here; but when will someone create a Pulitzer or Nobel for the kind of teaching that he embodies? (O'Brien, 1989, p. 372)

Much like O'Brien (1989), Schickel (1989) indicates that it is Keating's different teaching style that brings to the forefront the theme of conformity versus rebellion (or nonconformity).

> The film's eponymous secret society grope with energetic sobriety toward an idea that Keating keeps putting to them every way he can. It is this: the business of education is not to gather facts but to find a ruling passion, something around which you can organize your life. This is a point that seems to elude most kids nowadays, probably because it is one that their popular culture rarely troubles to make to them. ... There are times when Keating's colorful nonconformity verges on the tiresome. But basically Williams ... has come to act, not to cut comic rifts, and he does so with forceful, ultimately compelling, simplicity. Like everyone else involved in this movie, he is taking a chance on an odd, imperfect but valuable enterprise. He and the movie deserve attention, respect and finally gratitude. (Schickel, 1989, p. 78)

So despite criticisms by both Schickel and O'Brien, on a cinematographic level that the tensions in the film are perhaps too contrived or manufactured, both reviewers point to something essentially pedagogic about the film's intent. Keating is portrayed as a unique and inspirational teacher. He is shown demonstrating certain pedagogical qualities that enhance his ability to create opportunities for his students to embrace attempts at self-discovery and self-making. Several reviewers comment that there are many scenes that illustrate Keating's pedagogic teaching qualities and intentions for his students. Also in many of these scenes Keating demonstrates a strong sense of improvisational humor, a governing resolve to intelligently care for his students, and an overwhelming passion for his chosen discipline. Keating also possesses a pedagogic vitality, a certain understanding of the world, an interpretive intelligence, the ability to stand up for his students with an active, optimistic, and hopeful vision of their possible success in a world often wrought with crisis. With such qualities embodied in Keating's attitude and teaching, his students commit themselves to an evolving, special, and nurturing relationship with Keating. And it is this special, personal, and two-intentional relationship that is held up in stark contrast to the educative relations advocated by Welton Academy.

> The school, which aches to be English, is 100 years old and prides itself, of course, on its antiqued traditions. A new teacher challenges some of those traditions, especially hidebound, because of passion for subject and concern for his students. He shows especially well what he is daring .... He is witty, humane, unconventional, and irritates the rest of the faculty, but he sets out to win and stimulate the boys and does both. ... Nothing about this film sounds, as described, novel. Yet, it grabs, because it has been made with plentiful feeling, vigor, belief. ... We have all had at least one teacher like him--someone who fractures the die-cast role of teacher and seems a person with a life outside the classroom, who teaches as much out of that life as out of texts. (Kauffman, 1989, p. 26)

Kauffman (1989) continues the praise of Keating's pedagogic stance in contrast to that of the Nolan-Welton style and, in doing so, points to another significant element of Keating's pedagogic style. Kauffman (1989) believes that Keating's influence and power are guided by his connectedness to his own lifeworld. Keating is not a classroom performer in the sense that he takes on some contrived theatrical persona. His wit and interpretive intelligence, which are evident time and time again inside and outside of the classroom, reveals Keating to be authentically Keating.

Keating's teaching style is also honored by Kael (1989) who points to Keating's sense of vision, his questioning of what it means to be a human being, and his focus on the subjectivity of his students.

> Robin Williams plays John Keating, an eager, dedicated teacher with a gift for liberating his students. Crushed, frightened prep school boys flower in Keating's class. He talks to them about the passions expressed in poetry, and they become emboldened. The creative impulses they'd kept hidden--or didn't know they had--are released. ... In class, when Keating gives his attention to a boy who's distressed, you feel that he intuitively enters into the boy's fears. He's totally concentrated there and with his encouragement the shy boy makes up a poem, line by line, while standing in class. And even when Keating can't help the boys he listens to them with all his being; he hears them, and he speaks to them directly. ... Keating's generosity is reserved for the students. (Kael, 1989, p. 1)

From this initial overview of Keating's teaching style there is a highlighting of his pedagogically attuned listening, speaking, and seeing qualities. These are qualities that enhance and facilitate a special, responsive sensitivity utilized by Keating to come to know his students' subjectivity. This exploration of a student's subjectivity is made even more available to the film viewer, because as Kael (1989) documents there occurs an interesting shift in the film's narrative. This shift is such that the film, in its second half, more or less leaves Keating in order to follow the manifestations of a teacher's influence as revealed in the lives of his students.

> The movie shifts from one genre to another: the dedicated teacher gives way to the sensitive, misunderstood kid--in this case, Neil Perry, an all A-student who wants to become an actor. The link is that the boy, soaring on the confidence he experiences in Keating's class, lacks the shrewdness and courage to deal with his rigid, uncomprehending father. The shift in genres sidelines the one performer who sparks the viewer's imagination and substitutes a familiar figure: the usual romantic victim to identify with. (Kael, 1989, p. 1)

The reviewers suggest, then, that the value of *Dead Poets Society* is locked in its cinematographic portrayal of the iconic, pedagogic qualities of Keating's teaching style, and in its attempt to follow the consequences of that style as manifest in Keating's students' lives. As well despite the contrived quality of the filmic narrative, there is evidence that the film offers the possibility to wonder about Keating's relationship with his students as it is contrasted with the educative relationship Welton seems to advocate. The cinematographic narrative is riddled with the warring poles of optimism versus pessimism, and conformity versus non-conformity.

However, other critics have come to conclude that in addition to showing how a teacher might be with his or her students, there are other themes also evident in the tensions of the *Dead Poets Society* narrative. These other themes focus on the questions of a teacher's pedagogic authority, as well as his or her understanding of teacher intentionality, teacher and peer influence, and especially the teacher's sense of responsibility.

> (Keating's) electric preachings, in favor of independent thought as against rote-learning and the passive acceptance of dead-weight academic dogma, are inspiring stuff. But the story is about the consequences of this stirring and liberating crusade. They are at first delicious and amusing and then deadly serious for both the boys and their teacher.
>
> Freedom begets responsibility. ... What the teacher opens up is not so much a can of worms as a treasury of mind-opening possibilities, but without a cautionary note that might have said the equivalent of "Use as prescribed."

> Williams' characterization of Keating, the teacher, is remarkable in its shadings, from the serious, point-making clown to the serious man who must confront a situation that has gotten out of hand. The film's shift in tone, from the rollicking first days to the darker confrontations with obsessive parents, a rigid bureaucracy and other social realities, creates an uncommon feeling of intellectual and emotional movement. "Dead Poets Society" has lingering resonance. ... The pleasure of "Dead Poets Society," and the final satisfaction for the viewer; is the feeling that, in the face of turmoil, some sharp disillusionings and a tragedy, the boys really have come of age. They've surrendered a reckless naivete, which is not quite the same as a loss of innocence. But they have found a new and mature courage toward the taking charge of their own lives and thought. And that, of course, was Keating's dangerous but liberating theology. (Champlin, 1989, p. 1)

Champlin (1989) makes the point that the power of a teacher's influence must be understood in how it translates into the question of teacher responsibility. This tension between influence and responsibility seems to be a strong emergent theme in *Dead Poets Society.* Seidenberg (1989) echoing Champlin's comments writes

> The boys of Welton Academy are dutiful sons, their lives arranged by Dad and Mom like connecting dots. They need only move assuredly from point A, Welton, to point B, Harvard or Oxford, to point C, a prestigious law firm/corporation/bank.
>
> But that doesn't stop their new English teacher, John Keating, from encouraging them to break the pattern. With a contagious passion for verse and a lust for life, Keating exhorts his students to "seize the day" and think for themselves. Then, advocating that they strip themselves of prejudices, habits and influences, he sets each of the boys off on a quest for self-discovery with the command, "Make your lives extraordinary." ... The film focuses mainly on Keating's effect on the boys--how he motivates one to become an actor, one to fall in love, one to conquer a crippling shyness. (Seidenberg, 1989, p. 4)

Both Seidenberg (1989) and Champlin (1989) indicate that in the narrative shift in the film that follows the boys, and all that means in terms of plot and character development, there is also a shift to explore the relationship between influence and responsibility.

Like the film itself, the film reviews of *Dead Poets Society* are contradictory. On one hand most of the reviews seek to honor the qualities of Keating's vision and his significant teaching gifts. Keating's pedagogic qualities enable him to enter into a special and personal relationship with ready and willing students. The students openly authorize Keating to lead them in the direction he suggests. And the choice of direction involves Keating helping each student to explore a way to make it possible to achieve increased self-awareness. But on the other hand, several reviewers want to explore the questions evoked by the tragic consequences featured in the film's climactic conclusion. The questions raised here are about teacher and peer influence, teacher and parent intentionality, and ultimately self responsibility for others. The responses suggested by reviewers, in turn, cast some doubt on the depth and quality of Keating's pedagogic understanding of his life with other people's children.

> Welton (known as "Helton" to its inmates) is clogged with tradition and arcane ritual--candle-lighting ceremonies and drills in Latin declension--that seem designed to squeeze every drop of individuality out of its students.
>
> Improbably, the school has just hired ... John Keating ... (who is) the voice of funky common sense, as well as the great beating heart of human compassion.... Still there's something creepily domineering about him. When he stands on his desk, exhorting his students to "Seize the day! Make your lives extraordinary!" It's difficult to see the difference between the kind of discipline the school demands and the absolute obedience John Keating requires. At best, the character represents a kind of benign despotism--fascism with a goofy face.(Kehr, 1989, p. 1)

Finally, Netzi (1991) in an article entitled "Peter Weir and the Cinema of New Age Humanism" adds an interesting twist to the commentary about Weir's work in general and *Dead Poets Society* specifically. In an auteur study of Weir's films, Netzi claims there is significant evidence that Weir continually returns cinematographically to a relatively fixed set of thematic concerns. In documenting Weir's films such as *The Car That Ate Paris* (1974), *Picnic at Hanging Rock* (1976), *Last Wave* (1978), *Gallipoli* (1981), *The Year of Living Dangerously* (1983), *Witness* (1985), and *The Mosquito Coast* (1987) as well as *Dead Poets Society* (1989), Netzi suggests that Weir's deeper thematic concerns have largely escaped the attention of most traditional film reviewers.

> Consider ... the director's persistent interest in homosexuality, a subject that is at least implicitly present in several of his major films. ... The most elaborate of these gestures comes, however, in the recent *Dead Poets Society*; and it is also perhaps the most interesting because of the extent to which the entire subject is submerged beneath the ostensible concerns of the narrative. Again, we are in the world of an upper-class prep school, this time in fifties New England; again Weir has filled the screen with images of strikingly attractive young men; yet no mention is made of illicit love. Rather, the plot involves the rebellion of a group of straightlaced students against the rigid conformism of their milieu. Under the influence of an unconventional English teacher, they slip out of their dorm rooms at night to read poetry, act in a play in defiance of parental injunction, and generally irritate their puritanical elders. This is, admittedly, rebellion on the order of demanding ice cream instead of porridge, as any number of reviewers gleefully pointed out; however, one may come to feel that something else is going on here besides an

> unexpected surge of interest in Shakespeare and Whitman. In fact, the plot of *Dead Poets Society* makes better sense as an array of veiled references to situations that could not be openly represented without endangering the film's profits. The meetings of the society, for example, are deliberately given an air of innocence, which is supported by the thin backdating the action some thirty years; nevertheless, the spectacle of a group of boys sneaking off to a cave at night to sit in a circle and read poetry inevitably suggests less elevated adolescent rituals. And while the nominal point at issue between the hero and his autocratic father is the young man's desire to act in a play (as a fairy!), the suggestion in these final scenes of a teenager coming out of the closet is so strong that at least one reviewer was led to remark that the film would have been more intelligible had this in fact been its subject. (Netzi, 1991, p. 4)

Netzi (1991) advances the theme of latent homosexuality as a strong undercurrent in the film as a way to point out Weir's propensity to explore that which is unspeakable at any given moment in human history. In keeping with that tendency Netzi (1991) also suggests that the themes of self-making and self-responsibility are significantly hidden but present influences in the second half of the film *Dead Poets Society*. Having advanced these undercurrent themes in *Dead Poets Society*, Netzi (1991) offers a "New Age" twist to Weir's cinematographic thinking.

> At the same time, and notwithstanding these overtones, it is apparent that Weir is not simply offering a more decorous version of a kind of gay film-making ... it would be closer to the point to say that the motif of hidden sexuality in his films is itself a figure for a larger and considerably more ambiguous set of issues to which he has returned again and again, though with less ponderous obtrusiveness in recent years. For it is not gayness as a way of life that interests him, nor is it the discrimination that homosexuals have traditionally suffered. Rather, it is the fact that "the love that dare not speak its name" is a taboo subject in so-called genteel society, and as such exists in near kinship with ideas of the sacred--another invisible and irrational force that cannot be accommodated within polite discourse. This theme is the theme that remains closest to Weir's heart; and even a film as traditional-looking as *Dead Poets Society* has its mystical moment when Mr. Keating draws an introverted student into an effort of spontaneous creativity by muscling him around in front of the class, as if exorcising some sullen teenage demon, until the boy finally delivers a stream of ocular gibberish (Netzi, 1991, pp. 3-4).

Weir's cinematographic desire is to explore the mystical, the spiritual, and the forbidden, albeit within the dominant consciousness of a commercialized Hollywood context. He seeks to explore, in film, those illusive subterranean powers that are persistent, primitive, and influentially existent beneath the surface of a repressively rationalized modern existence. Weir's films, according to Netzi, are cinematographic reactions to the fragmentation and violence inherent in contemporary life. So Weir constructs films that explore both the unnamed, such as the sexual and spiritual forces ever-present although often hidden in contemporary society, as well as exploring the profoundly related notions of community loss and community building. Netzi (1991) concludes that Weir's cinematographic work shows us that the best we can do today is to cherish the personal relationships that sustain us through the worst of times.

Reviewing the reading:

Understanding responsibility is core to self-making and in other-making

Several film critics offer commentaries honoring Keating's pedagogical vision and teaching qualities. O'Brien (1989) believes Keating embodies his teaching discipline to the extent that it has become literally a *vocatio*, a calling. Being especially attentive to the whispers of the language spoken by the romantic poets, Keating calls for his students to "seize the moment" and to make their lives extraordinary. Schickel (1989) agrees with O'Brien (1989) and Kauffman (1989) that Keating is a passionate visionary who is gifted in his ability to influence students. All of these reviewers cite Keating's wit, passion for subject, concern and care for students, and his general authenticity as a dedicated teacher. Keating is also sensitive to the subjectivity of his students, and he is inspirational in the questions he poses regarding what it means to be human. Keating's passion for his discipline, others, and life itself sets up an educational challenge for his students to explore the tension between order and disorder, conformity and non-conformity.

Kael (1989) draws attention to the shift in the film away from a direct focus on Keating and onto the lives of his students. The second half of the film follows Keating's receptive group of seven who set out respectively and communally to revive a secret society, the Dead Poets. The re-born society, directed by the boys themselves, meets after dark against the school's rules in an old Indian cave. The cave is a space that has its own traditions in the realm of the spiritual and the mystical. In the cave the boys cite and create poetry following the invocation offered by Thoreau: "I wanted to live deep and suck out all the marrow of life." In the process the group of seven are moved to experience deeper forms of bonding. Gathering strength from their new found sense of community and individual freedom the boys strike out on individual journeys.

Dead Poets Society becomes a cinematographic attempt to see what happens after a catalyst teacher significantly influences his students and they go off to engage in attempts at self-making. Indeed, a good teacher is always present to his or her students as an infectious influence. An influence that emanates from a kind of immortality that never stops leading. But it is rare to see, cinematographically, the influence of the teacher as it manifests itself beyond the classroom.

However, several critics such as Champlin (1989) and Seidenberg (1989) also point out that Hollywood has an almost unconquerable desire for showing moral responsibility in as stark terms as possible. This desire to show in black and white terms moral dilemmas becomes evident in *Dead Poets Society* with the starkness of the death of Neil Perry. But Weir greys the cut-and-dried choice. Neil's death serves as a catalyst for deeper questions that go beyond the theme that even a little chaos in one's life can be dangerously wild. The deeper questions that surface, according to Kehr (1989) and Netzi (1991), in *Dead Poets Society* concern the question of teacher responsibility and irresponsibility such that both excessive creativity and conformity may result in tragic costs that must be paid in full with personal and professional, private and public lives.

Dead Poets Society becomes a film that requires reflective exploration concerning the complexity of interactional influences. Certainly older persons influence younger persons and younger persons influence older persons. But the influence, which flows between, is not equal. The older person has a certain responsibility to have the interest of the younger person at heart and at hand. This special interest on the part of the adult is also bounded by the situational, practical, normative, relational, and self-reflective features of living together in defining communities. *Dead Poets Society* raises, via the tension between the theme of teacher influence and student self-making, several questions regarding understandings of teacher responsibility. In this regard van Manen (1991) writes

> Pedagogical influence means not only that one is response-able but that in addition to this "ability to respond" one actually acts in a manner that is indeed responsible and thus morally accountable and defensible in terms of some pedagogical perspective, framework, or rationale. (p. 15)

The climax of the film opens the possibility of wonder about attempts to balance a workable understanding of teacher-making and student self-making. Where does one begin and the other end in terms of the intentions understood, the influence exerted, and the responsibility assumed. Todd accepts the responsibility to be more poetic and to overcome the ponderous influences of his brother, parents, and schooling. Knox accepts the calling of his heart to seek the love of his life and to overcome every objection to the contrary. Dalton accepts the challenge to change his environment, to influence others in important ways, and to confront the inertia emanating from his parents, school, and peers. Neil faces the call to respond to his desire to act, to be an actor, and to overcome the influence of an autocratic father and impotent mother. And yet all of this self-making by these students is initiated by Keating's influential understanding of his own self-making.

Certainly Nolan might be somewhat correct in his damning of Keating's lack of understanding of his responsibility for his students and to the students' parents. But on the other hand, when the boys stand for Keating and against Nolan, despite the tragedy of Neil's death, perhaps Keating understood his responsibility in ways Nolan can never understand. Keating is as committed to his convictions as Todd is to the responsibility he takes upon himself to remake his way in the world. And much like Keating Todd understands the value of that exact moment in which to act or not to act. Responsibility, for self and for others, emerges as a significant theme in *Dead Poets Society*.

READING THREE: Exploring *Dead Poets Society* as a deconstructed text

The present contains all there is. It is holy ground for it is the past, and it is the future. (Alfred North Whitehead.)

A Midsummer Night's Dream is a special Shakespearean play that presents a narrative dependant on an imaginary atmosphere that is half pastoral and half fairy. This fluctuating atmosphere forms the dubious ground for a series of absorbing adventures that involves shadowy mystical characters who exert influences that hold other characters spell-bound. Adventure after adventure befalls these spell-caught characters resulting in outcomes that they rarely seem responsible for. Moreover, there is no exact, specific logic for the drive behind the play's narrative other than the playing out of the character's adventures. As such, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* becomes a narrative of multiple stories of influential yet sylvan adventures of forever dreaming characters.

In the dominant pastoral-fairy motif, the characters come together primarily at night in a magical space where wood-divided worlds meet, mingle, and marry. In this regard it is not surprising that the film *Dead Poets Society* frames the play *A Midsummer Night's Dream.* The themes in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* of reciprocal influence and fluctuating responsibility are also evident in *Dead Poets Society.* Both play and film offer narratives that are playful, often magical, and reveal in a comedy-tragedy-pastoral tension a narrative that features the serendipitous, yet deeply influential, nature of the interplay of the life force poles of chaos and order.

The filmic narrative and its interruptions from Reading One, and the reviews of *Dead Poets Society* from Reading Two indicate that, for the most part, there is much more to this film than its black and white portrayal of the tragic consequences of the struggle between conformity and non-conformity. Taking a lead from these sources I suggest that although every adult and child, teacher and student, is continually encountering some form of influence, not all influence is pedagogically intended. As is evident in Reading One and

Reading Two a significant tension develops in *Dead Poets Society* between different kinds and forms of influence.

There is one form of influence depicted in the film that is animated by an authoritarian, disciplinary, tradition-staid, pessimistic understanding of intentionality and responsibility. This one side of the influence-responsibility pole is well represented by some of the Welton boys' parents, and especially Mr. Nolan and Mr. Perry. Whereas some of the parents of the boys of Welton seem to have chosen to exonerate themselves for being directly responsible for their children's education by assuming that they were responsible enough to find and to afford the best schooling possible for their children, there are other parents like Mr. Perry who must be directly responsible for their children's education. These differing forms of influence, fluctuating between singularly authoritative and singularly distanced, raise some questions about how an adult and teacher might understand his or her responsibility for a child or a student.

Then there is an alternative middle ground more or less embodied in John Keating's vision of the educative relation. In this case the influence is grounded in a much more optimistic sense of intentionality and a more responsive understanding of pedagogic responsibility. Keating is the alteric embodiment of that search for a more pedagogically grounded stance between abandoning children and students to fend for themselves, or tyrannically demanding complete submission and compliance to standards that children and students often have little voice in constructing. *Dead Poets Society* becomes an opportunity to reflectively explore how an adult educator might be able to mediate the influence that is influencing the lives of his or her students, and still be attentive to his or her responsibility to both the child and the community at large.

Welton Academy, in 1959, is a prestigious academic institution educationally preparing the young of the upper class. This preparation requires placing the students in a secluded, rural, male only, tradition-laden prep-school. The young, intelligent men who enter Welton are destined to become doctors, corporate lawyers, executive managers, engineers, and politicians. Indeed, most of the boys are following in the traditional yard-stick professions of their fathers and grandfathers.

In order to assure its students a proper education, Welton relies on the time-honored four pillars of tradition, honor, discipline, and excellence. Adherence to these guiding tenets ensures that the knowledge, the competencies, and the attitude required for the boys to achieve success in the contemporary world, will be secured. Administratively, this educational processing of Welton's students is overseen by Mr. Nolan.

Mr. Nolan, with the sanction of the boys' parents, has America's privileged sons live a Spartan existence within sanitized dormitory rooms. The boys are physically unified by a sea of blended school uniforms, and Nolan seeks to enhance the formation of a like-minded collectivity via mandatory public rituals of communal meals, common study halls, sanctioned worship, appropriate extra-curricular activities, and public relations assemblies. All these institutional elements reinforce and perpetuate the four pillars of learning and life as honored by Welton, and as administered by Nolan.

Welton Academy, then, embodies a specific discourse of education; a discourse grounded in a rationalist-positivistic approach that sees selective knowledge as a powerful commodity. To ensure such knowledge is transferred properly and is exactingly acquired, precision is required. Transference is most effective and efficient when all knowledge is categorically reduced into sequential, logical, and instrumental building blocks. Welton's mandate is to transfer selected and sanctioned knowledge, and to socialize its students into becoming discriminating knowledge consuming and knowledge utilizing citizens. The mandated goal of Welton is to produce successful graduates who, in turn, will be among those perpetuating the dominant values of the established social order.

Welton has a set curriculum, as advocated by Nolan, that requires exacting applications of a well-defined body of traditional knowledge disciplines. To ensure maximum compliance to the school vision of what constitutes knowledge a complementary view of authority is required. The school demands, through an extensive honor code, the abeyance to an external authority. Nolan makes every choice for every student in terms of academic study, dormitory functions, and extra-curricular activities. Hager acts as Nolan's roving enforcer.

Finally, in keeping with its view of knowledge and authority, Welton Academy sees its student body as the raw material required to produce representations of the approximations of the idealized template. To ensure the success of this processing system, the boys are segregated from any external source of contamination, and that includes women, the poor, the illiterate, non-whites, non-Christians, and so on. Through the meritocratic system that Welton honors, the boys are brought to understand that calculated delayed gratification guarantees a wonderful life. In accord with such mental-emotional control the boys must also demonstrate a self-control over their bodies. Still it is the mind that Welton seeks to honor and treat as a pure organ of cognition. The glorification of the academic status of Todd's brother is an example of that way of knowing and doing that is enshrined in Welton's traditions. Nolan verifies, via the opening ceremony, that Welton's success is measurable and accountable through the ever-increasing numbers of Ivy League placements.

To review, Welton's halls, curriculum, teachers, and administration perpetuate a positivistic educational dispensation reflective of contemporary society's grand narratives. Embedded in Welton's fabric are the workings of a Western consciousness that seeks to entrench a way of seeing and being. This consciousness manifests itself in a distanced, non-involved, and ever increasing level of abstraction applied to each and every aspect of life. So Welton features educationally privileged hierarchies, honored discipline specializations, selective theoretical conceptualizations, and a dominant respect for science and in all its technological glory. Accordingly the boys of Welton are asked to live in the service of the ideas that will make them into the managers of Western society. And to establish and reinforce the modern consciousness, every boy who enters Welton is handed the symbolic light of knowledge. This is a symbol of the rationalist heritage they must preserve as passed from sanctioned representatives to initiate neophytes. Upon entering Welton the boys must check any trust in their feelings or experiences at the door. Perhaps that is why in the opening scene of tearful goodbyes all take place outside the school buildings. And also evident in Welton's power structures is an honoring of the technological. The boys are destined to control the knowledge and the technology emergent through to the end of twenty century. They must be conditioned and groomed appropriately for this influential responsibility. To ensure the influence and corresponding sense of responsibility is appropriate as the correct world vision of life a criteria-based series of interactions grounded in input-output measurement is utilized. Appropriately then, observable performance is judged efficient and effective by testing, evaluation, and accountability. These are the hallmarks of the successful declaration that a Welton boy is responsible enough to enter the influential governing inner circle of the ruler class. So in its language, in its looks, in its gestures, and in its actions Welton privileges and legitimates a positivistic discourse; a discourse grounded in a history conceptualized by Western society as an ideological quest for perfection. Welton's primary administrative, moral, and educational influence and responsibility is to act as that social-cultural-political institution perpetuating the exclusively sanctioned norms of a privileged ruling class of society and especially those particular to the boys' parents.

Then enters John Keating, and with Keating there will eventually be foundational traumas in the consciousness and practices of Welton. In many ways Keating is the harbinger of things to come as Welton, and America, approaches the 1960s. Still change is only an option if there is an awareness and an understanding of how contradictions, mistakes, and tensions can create fruitful surprises. Keating enters Welton and immediately opens the possibility for a different understanding of how people might speak and act together. Does Keating's difference open the possibilities to question the foundational conditions that make existence at Welton both possible and impossible? Is Keating both the embodiment of a destructive and a constructive force?

Instantly with his first lesson Keating raises the question of self-identity and other-identity. By having his students face, and listen to the voices of, the boys of Welton past, Keating brings into question the Enlightenment tradition's influential boundaries of a self-perpetuating, positivistic self. The modern thinking subject lives within a self-defining dispensation that has cut the reciprocity connector between Self and Other, Self and World in the name of the quest for truth. Contemporary self-hood is defined by protocols that exclude any reciprocal sense of being part of an other-oriented, pedagogically-interactive community. In the modern world the thinking subject sees others as objectified beings. Others and otherness are envisioned as standing reserves for a sanctioned individual's consumptive self-improvement. The proper relationship between the ever-aspiring modern notion of self and everything else that exists out there must be one of distanced management. But by having the boys look very closely at the collectivity of the boys in the tomb-like trophy case, Keating seizes the comparative moment to wonder about the possibility for the present Welton boys to make their own lives and the lives of others different by changing their awareness of the relationship between self, other, and the world. At that moment, in that pedagogical moment, Keating's intention is to influence the influence currently dominating his boys' existence. Even in their glassy tomb, Keating knows the boys of Welton past are still the peer group of the boys of Welton present. Keating uses the powerful influence of the past speaking to the present in order to influence and change the direction of the course of events for his boy's now and in the future.

Welton had obviously made a difference in Keating's life. Assuming the Academy had been as oppressive as it currently is, how is it possible Keating emerged from Welton with such an aesthetic, romantic vision of life? Could it be that there was and still is something in the very condition of the prescriptive dominance of Welton's power structures, that also somehow embodies the conditions for a devitalization, a delegitimation, of Welton's hegemonic educational, political, and social fabric? Also does not Keating's return to Welton suggest that the influence of Welton, and its teachers, might ultimately be subordinate to the powers of self-making, and self-formation? Keating, a Welton honors student, must have had a keen sense of knowing when and how to resist. But also Keating's survival at Welton was enhanced by his involvement with the Dead Poets Society, an influential peer group. Keating uses those moments from his life story to influence his present class by telling them, and modeling for them, that they can make a poetic difference in the lives of others. But that awareness of difference must be exercised now, at this very moment, and cannot be deferred, deflected, or denied. To do so would be to become another Welton boy under glass.

Keating's challenge to the boys is for them to seek to make their lives extraordinary by exploring what is ordinary about life. In all of this Keating's pedagogic intention is to make it possible for the boys to be able to make themselves. As such the boys must have an opportunity to embrace being different. They must have an opportunity to understand what that difference means in contributing to making the lives of others different. Keating seems to know that if history has taught us anything, it is that meaningful, influential, and pedagogical relationships do make one's life, and the lives of others, unique, special, and different. And meaningful relationships happen as the result of individuals and communities having had the private and public courage to be responsive and responsible to that influence that calls to each human being from that which has been excluded in modernity's exclusive practices.

Keating seeks to influence his boys to embrace difference. But it is not a call suggesting that difference just for the sake of being different is the only thing to be valued. If each of Keating's boys did that, the play of haphazard differences would result in indifference. Rather, what Keating seems to want for the boys is for them to come to the hermeneutic understanding, via self-exploration, self-realization, and self-making that they are different if and when they have the courage to ask and respond to the question: what are the influentially pedagogical implications of another's difference for my self?

Keating's personal and professional mission is to make the difference excluded in Welton's story reveal itself for what it is. To do so Keating uses his considerable educational talents and pedagogic gifts. Creatively, he opens spaces inside and outside the classroom for the boys to engage in relationships that are fundamentally different from those required by the Welton way of existence. Within the Keating vision, the boys are encouraged to reestablish and redevelop a sense of a reciprocal community. As the boys become influentially enthralled by Keating's skills, promise, and modelling they begin to enter into a relationship with him and into deeper, more personal relationships with each other. As a result of Keating's pedagogical intent, teaching gifts, and passionate optimism several boys are inspired to begin explorations of ways to remake themselves. The boys' respective attempts appear highly individualistic, but they are also collectively shared, valued, and coordinated. Each boy's attempt also affords the other boys an opportunity to redefine their own, and others, boundaries and horizons. The boys as students become peer teachers and with each other they treasure their respective lived and shared experiences.

Keating's optimistic way of seeing, interpreting, and being recognizes the need for an epistemological understanding of life and education, but it also suggests that life itself, and the knowledge of life, is essentially ontological. What constitutes real knowledge, at this time and in this place, is an interpretive exploration of the contingent questions about what is really real. There are several moments in the film when Keating and the boys, and later the boys themselves, come very close to re-creating a different sense of reality. In those moments Todd discovers he can stand up for the poet in him. And when Todd stands up to his fear of words he is never the same again, and neither is Mr. Nolan. Knox's journey takes him on the road to offering himself to the woman he loves. And when Knox commits himself to trust his heart he is never the same again, and neither is Chris Noel. Dalton's attempts to remake who he is results in his renaming himself Nuwanda, placing articles in the school newspaper, and attempting to introduce girls to Welton. When Dalton discovers that humor and satire can rattle the foundations of even the most rigid institution he is never the same again, and neither is Welton. Neil, who seemed destined to live his frustrated father's quiet life of desperation becomes responsible for reviving the Dead Poets Society. And when Neil finds the courage to explore his passion for the theater he is never the same again, and his parents can never go back to their vicarious living through their son.

So how does Keating go about speaking and acting in a way that deconstructs Welton's entrenched power structures, and yet also in a way that pedagogically constructs an alternative means of being together? Keating, as the English teacher representing the literary tradition of the 20th century, should be at the vanguard of honoring the traditions. He should be the museum curator. He should be judiciously dispensing the entrenched knowledge of the centuries as captured in the literary texts valued by Western academic institutions. But in contrast, Keating appears as a rather puckish yet resolute fellow. He uses words, images, and texts in ways that are radically different from those the students are accustomed to.

Keating, then, seeks to selectively use the difference of poetic narrative as a means to bring about a confrontation with the structured expository rationality of Western thought and practice as embodied in Welton's power structures. Keating knows that the relationship between language and experience, manifested in any speaking and acting together, is never neutral. The relationship reflects deeply embedded systems of value. In exploring the hegemonic denotative-prescriptive language that dominates Welton, and in having it expose itself for the exclusive, hierarchic, positivistic discourse it is, Keating is able to offer the possibility of another way of speaking together, a more poetic way.

If deconstruction means to circumscribe and to lay bare the construction of a discourse, then that is what Keating attempts. His teaching methods seek to show how a discursive system functions, and that includes showing what such a system excludes and denies. Keating offers an encounter with the denotative-dominated language games privileged at Welton and that are perpetuated via a narrative of rationality. Keating's deconstructive sense, as a political activity, has the ideological function and content of Welton's rationalist, positivistic discursive system expose itself for what it is. And what the system is in reality is an interpretive story. Welton's positivistic-oriented narrative is selective, but the narrative is also subject to the qualities of all narratives. That is even Welton's dominant, supposedly set, story is open to interpretation, and thus change.

Keating exposes the primary texts (sounds and images) of Welton as selectively chosen narrative constructs. As such, even Welton's texts reveal themselves as interpretations of interpretations. Welton's supposedly rigid narrative reveals itself as riddled with contradictory purposes, mixed motives, and tensions between what is stated and what is not stated. Still Keating is selective in his approach to the deconstruction of Welton's texts. He attempts to show that it is the present that always contains the traces of what is absent. His deconstructive stance works to show the intimate regress and arbitrariness of the interpretation process. He attempts an attentive rereading and revealing of Welton's texts not for the sake of epistemology or cultural relativism, but in the interest of setting a lifeworld reader free and of setting the lifeworld texts free of the present hegemonic positivistic consciousness of modernity as that which dominates Welton. Keating may concede the space created and the freedom glimpsed may only be accessible for a moment, but he also knows that a lived experienced moment is all it takes to change a life's direction forever.

Keating's deconstructive techniques also involve a form of performative show and tell. He shows his students something sanctioned, and then via endless pun, play, and parody of his and of others' interpretations of this something, the something eventually calls out to that which to this point it had oppressed, excluded, and obliterated in order for it to exist as it did. In this way Keating attempts to destabilize, to make arbitrary, and to confront the taken-for-granted spaces constructed and employed by modern citizens to avoid the ontological questions of life. Ironically these are the questions without "real" answers. Questions that positivism continually warns us about in that they might just drive us crazy. It is a risky business on Keating's part to ask questions that eventually fall outside the boundaries of Welton's traditions.

But still Keating is no nostalgia seeker, nor is he a utopian dreamer. Although he uses Romantic and transcendentalist poetry and imagery as a space creator within which to explore similarity and difference, Keating cautions his students about romanticizing both the past and the future. It is the present Keating desires to explore. The present must be his students' focus also. Keating knows that the play of language and the play of experience as manifest in the present are forces that might seriously confront both Welton's treasured past and prescribed future.

So Keating implores his charges that poetic expression must metaphorically "drip from their tongues." For Keating's boys it is not enough to read poetry, or to write poetry, or to feel poetry. These young men must know what it means to attempt to become poets. That is to live in the marginalized tension as if they had something to say that is unspeakable. They must attempt to poeticize their worlds. They must live in its intended compression of time and space; that is, to act and speak as if attentive to a poetic language much different than the technological languages of science, commerce, medicine, engineering, politics and so on. In order to experience another way of being in language, Keating utilizes his pedagogic training and realizes his students must attempt to live life with poetic compression, in the gaps and spaces that give meaning its meaning. Poetry seizes the moment, glorifies the moment, fears the moment, and it also satirizes the moment. But what it does better than any mode of expression is make what is absent significant. When Keating calls for his students to "seize the day" and to live within the moment, it is not some hedonistic self-indulgent ego trip he advocates, but rather the moment becomes the very condition of the possibility to experience, and to try to give voice to, what is both present and absent in a given instant. Keating's hope seems to be that if the boys face the deep structures, which have to a large extent determined their existence to that moment, they will be able to live with the defining surface structures of contemporary society in a much more creative and freeing way, perhaps in a more poetic way.

Still in all of his romantic and poetic advocacy, Keating attempts to remain connected to his students as a realist and a pragmatist. The point of the walking exercises in the garden is to have Dalton choose not to walk differently as Keating had asked of the boys. The point of having different students stand on Keating's desk is not only to show that the change in physical perspective can alter one's vision, but that even at the same physical height everyone sees something different. After an incident where Dalton stages a call from God, in a school assembly, Keating becomes the voice of pedagogic reason. He tells each and every one of his charges that to be truly insightful and attentive to the difference that might make a difference in the lives of others, they must know when to actively resist and when to understand that non-action might be an equally important gesture. Keating does not advocate any all out rebellion, or anarchy, but rather he challenges the boys to explore a sense of controlled resistance and an imaginative exploration of possible constructive alternatives. Keating knows that in that way, and only in that way, will his students survive Welton and possibly go on to face, in creative ways, the overwhelmingly positivistic, power-based system they must surely function in. Seemingly Keating did just that when he was a student at Welton. He managed to build an alternative sense of community and he must have lived in the life-giving tension between how things were and how they might be.

What is at stake, according to Keating, in the struggle at Welton is the possibility for the boys to make their lives extraordinary. By extraordinary Keating means the boys must find their own voices, and discover their own stride in life. Ironically, these young men who are destined for power positions in American society (and in every way will be considered extra-ordinary by the rest of that society) are essentially trapped by the expectations of a structure of conformity. The boys are trapped by the very power structures that are supposed to offer them the possibility to do whatever they wish with their lives. The truth evident in each boy's journey to Welton is that their future lives and their past lives exert tremendous influential control over them. Do Dalton, Neil, Todd, and Knox feel free in the security of knowing what kind of life in America's ruling class awaits? Is it probable, or even possible, that once they become the pillars of their respective communities that they may suddenly do anything they please?

Perhaps the deconstructive point embodied in the film's portrayal of Keating as alternative, as different, is that in every discourse, and in some more than others, and in every way of acting, no matter how restrictive or open, there exists a certain embedded alterity or otherness. This otherness lives within, above, and beneath the discourse or practice that a society has chosen to honor. In a post-Freudian sense otherness lies as if in waiting. Eventually there is the possibility, the opportunity, that this otherness will be consciously felt, seen, heard, and given voice. This often sudden awareness happens when the distractibility of the privileged order becomes dissipated, cracked, or exploded under its own weight, or from attacks from the outside.

When the boys re-establish the *Dead Poets Society* they initiate a way for themselves to be otherwise. The meeting cave is physically, emotionally, and symbolically a secure space for the boys. There they can be different from what is required of them in Welton's halls, classrooms, and dormitories. As they continue to meet in the cave and over time they gain confidence in what they can do and what they can say both inside and outside that space. The boys also come to see what is surplus and deficient in their lives--private and public. So it does not just happen that each boy understands what is absent in his life. He is brought to that awareness in a community of others. Dalton knows that absent in Welton is a gender balance. Neil knows that in declaring himself an actor he is acknowledging that different part of himself, and ironically he is suddenly aware that he has been playing the dutiful son all along. Knox knows that if he trusts his heart his love for Chris will move her heart. Todd knows that when one speaks is far more powerful than what one speaks.

The narrative of *Dead Poets Society* makes little attempt to hide the contrast, differences, and tensions portrayed on the screen between Nolan and Keating. In fact, the film's plot exploits the starkness between Keating's and Nolan's different way of understanding students, education, and life. The film's narrative places these men and their respective visions in an adversarial position. The question that is opened up by the film's depiction of the educative polarities, the Reading One interruptions, the Reading Two reviews, and this reading is: what is the nature of Keating's pedagogic responsibility?

Keating's teaching appears, in contrast to the established norms of Welton, to be, at a minimum, playful with respect to both content and process. On occasion Keating seems to abdicate his duty to deal with the prescribed traditional curriculum as requested by Nolan. He also appears, at times, to advocate a rather arbitrary attitude toward tradition-laden expectations that are so evident at Welton. The resulting conflict between Keating's intentions and influence, Welton's intentions and influence, and the boys' intentions and influence on each other provide a most complex predicament for the viewer of the film even before the death of Neil Perry. But it is the death of Neil, which brings Nolan acting as the spokesman for the dominant Western understanding of educational responsibility, to emphatically accuse Keating not only of disciplinary hedonism, but of ethical, educational, and political nihilism. Nolan's essential charge is that Keating's irresponsibility regarding Welton's intentions for its students makes Keating responsible for Neil's irresponsible death.

In this regard, Nolan echoes an understanding of responsibility as a negation. Responsibility is that something a person can be held accountable for. But responsibility itself is defined as that which is left over after everything that is inexcusable has been defined as irresponsibility. Anything that is not irresponsible must define what it is to be responsible. This understanding leads to a rather black and white process of an empirical accounting of inexcusable acts by which to judge responsibility or the lack of it. Nolan, after tabulating Keating's irresponsible behaviors, intentions, and influence pronounces

Keating to be irresponsible with respect to his teaching duties, his students, the community, the parents, and the process of education itself. Inexcusably, Keating took advantage of a trusted and authoritative position to prey upon vulnerable, easily influenced students and thus to led them astray. These irresponsible actions are what make Keating responsible for Neil's death. Acting accordingly, Nolan as judge-jury-executioner banishes Keating from the classroom, the school, and perhaps his vocation completely. Once Keating is removed from Welton, Nolan assumes that also gone are Keating's inexcusable behaviors, his cancerous exploitation, and his poisonous influence. On Nolan's part his actions are the only responsible thing to do.

Still some members of the film's audience must not only wonder about Keating's role in Neil's death but also Nolan's. Certainly most teachers strive to balance authority and responsibility. Teachers know, and have lived with, the influential dangers of too much permissiveness and too much authoritarian rule. But even within these tensions, which constantly force the teacher to question his or her personal and professional life, a teacher is called upon pedagogically to be responsible to and for the child in his or her care. Every teacher who engages in a pedagogical relation with his or her students must make choices based upon his or her intentions for the child. And yet although the process of knowing when to act and when not to act requires a special sensitivity on the part of teachers, a pedagogic teacher has no choice with respect to their responsibility for both their actions and non-actions. They are responsible. However, these questions of intent, influence, and responsibility are not easily manipulated into either-or, cause-effect relationships. The accounting system Nolan advocates for moral responsibility doesn't add up, but then again in some ways a teacher must be held accountable for the good of the child entrusted into his or her care.

The world has been, is, and will continue to be riddled with a contingent nature. We grow up as contingent human beings. But, for the most part, we do grow up. We become educated about what it means to live in such a world. Being an adult should indicate we have some abilities to interpret and transform our experiences of life's contingent nature into a commitment to life and a responsibility for our life and the lives of others. As adult teachers we live in even closer proximity to a vocation that calls upon us continually to respond to life's contingent nature. And still we must act. Accordingly we teach, model, and lead students as if we know what we are doing is good enough for them to give shape to their life's contingent nature.

A pedagogically sensitive teacher is aware of life's playfulness. He or she is always living in the playful condition of the doubting, questioning, and norming of what teachers must do. The pedagogy of living with children becomes an ongoing project of renewal. The teaching project, like the larger project of life, influences teacher-student-subject matter relationships. A teacher's actions and non-actions show just how oriented that teacher is toward his or her students and the contextual community they all must live with.

The negation of what might be understood as the pedagogical responsibility is witnessed in the film in the physical abuse of Dalton's beating, the mental, emotional, and psychological abuse of Mr. Perry and Mr. Nolan toward everyone they meet, or the passive abuse such as neglect which is evident in Todd's absentee parents. It is in this negation of the notion of pedagogical responsibility that the film flips, perhaps unintentionally, via the teacher-student dichotomy. Children-students cannot be charged with the pedagogical responsibility of protecting and directing a parent's or teacher's growth and development. But just as certainly children-students can and do show parents and teachers the possibility of experiencing the world and being in the world in ways that are unique and different. Older children and students do authorize, directly or indirectly, the parent-teacher to be morally responsive, and thus responsible to those normed values that ensure the child's well-being and growth toward mature self-responsibility are modelled. In the film the Welton boys themselves are the ones who eventually show up Nolan's vision of responsibility as a deadly negation, and as a poverty-stricken empirical system of accountability. By standing to support Keating, at the end of the film, the boys offer a lead to their leader and show Nolan he has much to learn about what it means to be responsive to students and ultimately responsible for students.

There is a hope that Keating has not been irresponsible. He is not a hedonistic anarchist with a wanton disregard for life. Keating taught his boys as if responsible to a hope that there can be some joy to learning and living. And even his attempted deconstructionist project is not irresponsible. Caputo (1988) claims that a deconstructive project of revealing and criticizing the powers that be is not an irresponsible project; rather it is a project that addresses, at its deepest, the contingent nature of life. Caputo (1988) writes, "The height of responsibility is to wonder about the origin of what calls for a response" (p. 64). For Keating that deep call is embedded both in his passion for his subject discipline and his love for his students. In order to have the boys even begin to be aware that they must eventually engage in self-making with and for others, Keating must have them explore the present as that force which denies that possibility and yet calls out for its birth. Difference lives in the present as a presence and as an absence. Keating's teaching at Welton is set in motion by difference. His methods arise from the experience of difference. The claim made on Keating by Welton, Nolan, and especially his students is not that of presence but of absence. Keating's way of being in the world with his students makes room for chance, arbitrariness and, for a few moments, a savoring of the difference that must continually be extinguished by the same.

The lessons embedded in *Dead Poets Society* open up for discussion questions about the nature of pedagogical intentionality, influence, and responsibility. And in doing so the film requires a response on our part as we wonder about the very condition that makes teaching possible. This wondering goes to the heart and soul of the educative project. If the height of a teacher's response-ability is to wonder about the origin of what calls for a response, then John Keating is far more pedagogically responsive than Nolan. And yet perhaps one must concede that Keating's response was too poetic, too romantic.

Although his desire to poeticize the world has intriguing possibilities and offers many lessons by which to experience and to tell the metaphoric story of life's encounters, it is still not a truly pedagogic way of being in the world. Perhaps that is what John Keating wonders about when he sees the face of Neil Perry each and every night in his dreams. Could the same be said for Mr. Nolan or Mr. Perry?

Dead Poets Society may have set out to show a story of a teacher's intentions and the subsequent influence as tragic consequences and ended up questioning the core elements of a teacher's understanding of his or her sense of responsibility, but as the film reveals itself within its own tensions there is the possibility to also wonder if, paradoxically, the question of educational responsibility is not so much a question at all. Rather pedagogical responsibility is, first and foremost, a response that a pedagogically-sensitive teacher exhibits in both his or her conscious and unconscious intentions to act and not to act. Pedagogic responsibility is embodied in and between a responsiveness between a tactful teacher and a ready and willing student who have come together bounded by the subject matter at hand. The resulting actions, some of which are successful and some of which are unsuccessful, act in themselves to continually bring a teacher to question the nature of his or her teacher responsibility. But before, during, and after that reflective and reflexive wondering about what it means to be a teacher, a teacher must understand he or she is that responsibility. Before a teacher can take responsibility he or she is called by the child to be responsible in the most intimate and challenging way. In that moment at the end of *Dead Poets Society* when the boys stand up for Keating and he knows they are seeing life differently, all the questions and doubts about our own intentions, influence, and responsibility engulf us as an audience of teachers and learners. The film is pedagogically debatable in this regard. Many doubts and questions remain about a teacher's moral responsibility to and for his or her students. However, John Keating, Neil Perry, and Mr. Nolan can share much of the responsibility for framing certain choices with respect to the question of responsibility itself.

CHAPTER SEVEN

MADAME SOUSATZKA AS A PEDAGOGICAL EXEMPLAR:

A QUESTION OF INTENTIONALITY

Introduction

What follows are three readings based upon the feature motion picture *Madame Sousatzka* (Schlesinger, 1988). Each of the three readings is similar in format to that used in the exploration of *Stand and Deliver* and *Dead Poets Society* .

READING ONE: *Madame Sousatzka* as a narrative [and *interrupted*] text

I give you our dear friend, a kind hostess, our great pianist and pedagogue, Madame Irena. A celestial woman in the heroic mould. (Cordle - *Madame Sousatzka*.)

Principal characters in *Madame Sousatzka*[39]

Shirley MacLaine as Madame Sousatzka
Shabana Azmi as Sushila
Twiggy as Jenny
Geoffrey Bayldon as Cordle
Robert Rietty as Leo Milev
Jamila Massey as Mrs. Ahuja

Navin Chowdhry as Manek Sen
Dame Peggy Ashcroft as Lady Emily
Leigh Lawson as Ronnie Blum
Sam Howard as Edward
Lee Montague as Vincent Pick
Mohammed Ashiq as Sunil

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[39] (a) The musical scores used in *Madame Sousatzka* are extracts from: "Mouret Bourrees" arranged by T. Murray, "Impromptu No. 4 in A Flat" (D899) by Franz Schubert, "Etude in D Sharp Minor No. 12" by Frederic Chopin, "Spinning Song" from "Songs Without Words" by Felix Mendelssohn, "Etude in D Flat Major, Un Sospiro" by Franz Liszt, "Polonaise in A Flat Major", "Etude in A Flat Major" by Frederic Chopin, "Carnaval", "Tr'a'umerei" from "Scenes of Childhood" by Robert Schumann, "Melodie de Gluck" from *Orfeo ed Eurydice* by Christoph Gluck, "Sonata No. 3 in C Major" (last movement) by Ludwig van Beethoven, "Concerto No. 1 in D Minor (Op. 15)" by Johannes Brahms, "Fantasia in F Minor (D940) for Four Hands" by Franz Schubert, "Piano Sonata No. 23, Op 57 in F Minor" by Ludwig van Beethoven, "Concert study for piano Waldersrauschen" by Franz Liszt, "Overture from *Le nozze di Figaro*" by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, "Piano Concerto in A Minor Op. 54" by Robert Schumann, "The Arrival of the Queen of Sheba" by George Friederic Handel, "String Quartet No. 2 in A Minor (Finale)" by Johannes Brahms.
(b) Music performed by: The London Symphony Orchestra with conductor Christopher Adey; saxophone quartet called The Fairer Sax; the pianist at Portman Hall was Barry Douglas; the improvisational Indian music was by Ismail Sheikh, Punjta Gupta; the Beethoven to Boggie sequence by Yonty Solomon.
(c) Songs in the film: "Hiding From the Eyes of Love" by C. Skarbek, T. Smit and performed by Twiggy, "Feel the Motion" by T. Smit, C. Sharbek and performed by C. Sharbek.

Scene 1. A young man's fingers fidget. He cracks the joints. He bends the fingers back and forth. His face is intense. He looks about the crowded auditorium as a flute solo continues. Everyone seems focused on the girl playing the flute. There is one empty chair beside a man in a dark suit. He checks his watch. The man rises as an ensemble begins to play. The boy continues to flex his fingers. The boy's mother, in traditional Indian dress, smiles at her son when she catches his eye. She blows him a kiss and draws a smile on her own lips gesturing to the boy to smile. He does so.

Scene 2. Outside the performance hall a black taxi pulls to a stop, and exiting from the taxicab is a middle-aged woman. She pays the taxi driver and offers him some advice about copper bracelets for his arthritis. She turns and marches toward the concert hall with her large black cape flying in the breeze. The walkway is lined with street kids listening to rock music.

"Oh Dracula's back," smirks one kid as the others laugh.

The woman strides into the building at the end of the walkway.

The woman is met at the door by the well-dressed man who seemed to be eagerly awaiting her arrival. She is guided to her waiting chair.

Scene 3. The boy's mother takes notice of the presence of the lady entering. "Madame Sousatzka." The boy begins playing the piano. The credits roll. The woman listens carefully and looks over to notice the beaming mother. The boy's music making continues. The credits roll on. There is a panoramic view of the concert area. The woman whispers to the man beside her. The audience applauds as the boy finishes. He bows. The audience continues to applaud enthusiastically. The woman casts an eye toward the boy's mother who is still clapping furiously. [*The boy (Manek) seems to have reached a certain level of readiness in terms of his music. Madame (the late arriving woman) is there to respond to that need to move on musically. The love of music brings the two together. But even so there seems to be hint of a tension already at work between the teacher of music and the* *mother (Sushila) of the musician with respect to each person's respective intentions for the boy. Could intentionality be a possible theme in this film?*]

Scene 4. The television screen reflects an Indian movie. Three Indian woman sit around the set. Mrs. Ahuja rises to answer the door bell. Sushila intercepts her in the hall, and Sushila opens the door herself. It is a cab driver. Sushila tells the driver she will be right out. She closes the door and turns to say, "Mrs. Ahuja, if you will lend me 10 for the taxi I will let you have it with the other 10 when I pay the rent cheque."

Mrs. Ahuja takes out some money and says, "So soon he will be giving concerts in Albert Hall?"

"Oh yes. She says he is a genius. Thank you, Mrs. Ahuja. You'll have my cheque tomorrow," says Sushila. Mrs. Ahuja returns to the living room to watch the movie with her friends.

Scene 5. A taxi pulls up in front of an older building. The area is surrounded by sale signs as well as the sights and sounds of construction. A young girl plays the piano as Madame stands over her. "Play. Play. It's from here," says Madame. She taps the girl's stomach then she moves to answer the ringing door bell.

"It's open. Always open," says Lady Emily from the small garden area beside the front door. Sushila enters the building and goes upstairs to enter Madame's studio. Madame dismisses the young piano student.

"Ya. Yes. Mrs. ... Manek's mother," says Madame.

I'll see you Wednesday, Madame Sousatzka," says the girl. However, before the girl leaves Madame demands a curtsey and that the girl say good-bye in French. After a slight protest the girl complies. Madame asks her to redo it once again with more grace.

Sushila witnesses this and says, "I love old-fashioned manners. They are so gracious and beautiful."

As the girl gets to the bottom of the stairs a door to Dr. Cordle's office opens. Cordle emerges to usher a patient out. He then welcomes another patient in.

Madame pours tea as Sushila begins to tell Madame about Manek. Madame interrupts to have Sushila re-pronounce Madame's name several times until she is satisfied.

"When I take on talented students, exceptionally talented students, the lessons with me will be paid for by the school trust. This opportunity is entirely up to him."

Sushila says, "I am sure he will work hard. He is very grateful. We both are Madame Sousatzka." Again Madame corrects the pronunciation of her name. They both sit.

Sushila says, "Ever since he was two it has been he and I alone in the world."

"And his father?"

"His father is just a rat," Sushila says. "I don't care who knows it. Everyone knows it in Delhi and what sort of life I had with him. Until one day I had enough. That was it. I just walked out with my baby and my suitcase. One suitcase mind you." Madame pours the tea. Sushila continues her story. "It would have taken fifty suitcases full of my diamonds, jewels, and saris."

"Sugar?"

"Only three," says Sushila. "We are not just from here and there you know. We are related to some of the first families of Bengal. No, I never thought I would have this kind of life. There have been times frankly when I couldn't pay the rent and I have had to pack up and leave at night. But never mind about me. My life is over. I want only now for my son. I want for the day when he will be famous and rich and give many concerts all over ...."

Madame stands abruptly and with pointed finger says, "No. No. No. We say nothing about concerts. We are talking about your boy and his gift which I am here to develop. I can't bear this attitude of everything for sale. The boy's talent in the street? Let's make money, cash, cash, quick, quick, quick. Results. Forgive me but I have very strong feelings about this." Madame sits and both pause to drink their tea.

"Please don't think I am a commercial person. I am very proud of my son. He is a genius. You don't think he is a genius?" Sushila asks sheepishly.

"I don't use that word. Mrs. ... ah ... Sen."

"Please call me Sushila."

The phone rings. Madame answers. "Wednesday at two," says Madame. She turns back to Sushila, "Now, I can take him on Tuesdays and Thursdays. No Tuesdays and Fridays."

"Oh, but he has to help me on Fridays. It is a very busy day for me with the weekend orders."

"Hum." Madame moves toward Sushila. "Mrs. Sen whenever I take on a new student I give myself and my time totally and freely. It is an absolute commitment for both of us--the student and myself--because as you see," she has returned to sit beside Sushila with tea cup in hand, "I teach not only to play the piano, but how to live." She adds a drop of liquor to her tea cup and adds some to Sushila's cup. "You will be very proud of your son. Now there are two of us to care," smiles Madame as she lifts her cup in salute. Sushila complies and drinks and coughs at the added spirits. [*This scene reinforces the expectation boundaries between Sushila as Manek's mother and Madame as Manek's music teacher. Sushila documents her sacrifices for her son. She dreams of his success and sees the benefits not only for her son but also for herself. But everything hinges upon Manek's performative successes. Madame speaks of a different intent. She speaks in terms of music as art, and of talent as a gift, and of success as a possibility but only with hard work, desire, and commitment. This early tension between the mother's expectations of Madame as a music teacher who will make her son ready to play concerts, and Madame's intent to nurture the gift Manek embodies seems destined to swell up again. Madame seems to want to protect Manek from having his gift exploited, degraded, and consumed. Sushila sees the rareness of Manek's talent as its most valuable selling point.*]

Scene 6. Woodford, the neighbourhood project contractor, emerges from a building in a construction area. He opens the car door and answers the ringing car phone. He tells the caller to offer a problem tenant in the area another $1000 and because the tenant is 70 if he doesn't accept the offer to take the staircase out and leave him stranded. Woodford then tells the caller he is off to straighten out number 11, Lady Emily.

Scene 7. Lady Emily's building is the contractor's target. He rings the door bell.

"The door is open. Always open. Push," chimes Lady Emily.

"Lady Emily? Good to see you again. John Woodford." They shake hands.

Mr. Cordle reminds a patient about his neck and notices Woodford and Lady Emily going down stairs. Sushila is descending the stairs and Madame stands at the top looking down. Woodford offers to buy the building from Lady Emily. Lady Emily continues to lead Woodford into her basement suite seemingly ignoring his offer.

"I am afraid you will have to give me a little more time," says Lady Emily. "It is not always easy you know to part with a house where one was born." As Lady Emily talks Woodford feels the moisture on the basement walls and suggests to Lady Emily that everyone needs a change once in awhile. She tells him of her dreams of a country home.

"Is that so," says Woodford as he continues to feel and inspect the damp and cracked walls.

Scene 8. In the school yard Manek tells his friends he will see them later. He has a piano lesson. Manek, complete with roller skates and head phones, skates down the street. A black cab passes him and stops at Lady Emily's. From the upper window Madame peers out. Manek is now on the front steps changing into his running shoes. He looks up to see a pair of woman's legs, no shoes, sliding out of the cab. Jenny--a blond in a short purple skirt, shoes in hand, gets out of the cab. She says hello to Manek and advances up the stairs. Manek gets up and follows. Madame closes her curtain from above. On the second landing Madame emerges from her suite and calls to Manek who is still following Jenny up the stairs.

"I believe it is me you have come to see. I watched you rolling about on those skates. You must not do that. If you fall and something happens to your hands. I never want to see you on those skates again." She gently grabs Manek by the scuff of his pullover and directs him into her suite. Manek places his skates behind the door. He removes his jacket as Madame goes to the piano. He is about to put his coat on the chair and Madame corrects him and tells him to put his coat elsewhere. The piano stool is spun by Madame until she emphatically stops it. She says, "Perfect height." Manek sits. He smiles and nods. Madame says, "You see I know exactly." And to Manek's inquiry about what to play Madame says, "At the very beginning. I want you to forget everything you have learned. Start with the C major scale."

"Which hand?" asks Manek.

"Which hand he asks. Why my poor child which hand indeed. Why both hands. For me you and the piano are one. In perfect harmony."

Manek sits at the piano; Madame is behind it. He plays passionately with speed then stops and smirks placing his hands on his hips.

"You do not have to impress me with how clever you think you are," says Madame. Manek's smile fades. "You move around far too much Mr. Virtuoso. Perfect scales have no beginning and no end. Each note is as smooth as these beads." Madame leans over Manek and shows him her beads. "Forget the fingers, don't think for one moment you play with your fingers. If he thought for one moment about his he would be at the bottom of the ocean now never to be heard of again." Madame has snatched a stuffed octopus from the piano top and shows it to Manek as she made the comments about fingers. Plopping the octopus down on the piano Madame moves behind Manek and grabbing his hands asks, "What are these ten poor little worms?" She shakes his hands hard. She then pulls back his shoulders and taps on his stomach. "This is where it comes from. The abdomen. It rises higher and higher from the depths of your soul and higher." She pulls on his shoulders. "From the deepest instincts to the height of reason until it reaches here," her hands are on the top of his head, "You see." Then she reaches over and covers his eyes and pulls his head into her chest. She directs him to play the scales. "Ebb and flow, smooth. Each note. Let it play." As he plays back and forth on the scales

Madame still covers his eyes. "That's it." Manek's fingers run over the keys. These images blur and run into images at a later time of Manek still practicing.

"Soft," snaps Madame. Madame moves to the end of the piano partly hidden behind arranged photos. "Softly, very softly." Madame strains to hear each note, one hand pointing and the other reaching to secure a cookie from the jar beside the piano. "To hear with these clumsy human ears." She takes a bite of the cookie and as she crunches it she steps back. "Remember the position of the shoulder. Yes. Remember. Yes. Just a vibration." She gets closer to the piano and picks up another cookie as she approaches. "Shhhh." Manek slowly stops playing. "Mama's special recipe," says Madame as she slips a cookie into Manek's mouth and pats his shoulder telling him to rest a moment.

Later Manek is again playing. "No, no," Madame pounds on the piano. "Allegro, allegro. No. Too heavy," she says as she walks back and forth throwing her hands into the air. Manek continues to play. "It is too heavy. Bright. Bright, " Madame calls out. "Don't collapse the fingers."

On the stairs outside Madame's studio Ronnie Blum, music agent, stops to listen to Manek's playing. "The fingers, the fingers ... don't collapse the fingers," he hears from inside the room. Inside Madame paces. "You sound like an old man shuffling in his slippers," says Madame. Blum slowly pushes the door open even further. Madame continues to pace and say, "Skip, skip, hoopla ...." Madame turns to see the open door and Blum standing there listening. She goes over and slams the door.

Blum continues up the stairs. Madame continues to have Manek play. Jenny is in the flat upstairs and is on the phone.

"Well has he listened ... I handed them in two weeks ago. I told you Jenny Plover. P.l.o.v.e.r. Just tell him Jenny. He will know who I am." Blum enters Jenny's flat. He is humming as he enters carrying a bag. Jenny hangs up the phone. Blum goes to the kitchen table. Jenny follows Blum to the kitchen area and tells him it is going to be a bad month for her. He suggests a drink will cheer her up. He has also brought her bubble bath. "You run a bath while I pop the cork," says Blum as he takes out the champagne.

"I just had a bath," replies Jenny.

"Have another," says Blum.

"I am not dirty," says Jenny.

Blum embraces Jenny and kisses her. Manek's piano playing can be heard through the floor. "Is that Madame's latest?" questions Blum.

"Yes. I've got my latest," Jenny snaps back as she bolts free from Blum and puts a cassette in the player. "Hope you like it?"

"Yup, it is good," says Blum after a brief moment. "Now how about the bath?"

"Men," says Jenny. "One track mind." She goes to run a bath.

Blum has gone to the door for a moment to listen to the piano music as he opens the bottle. He shuts the door and tells Jenny he had supper with a music producer last night but he has forgotten his last name. Jenny is upset that he did not mention her tape. Blum says it is good and hands her a glass of liquor.

"He is good. How old is he?" asks Blum of Manek.

"Never mind about him," says Jenny. "Did you come here to be with me or what?" She turns to put her hair up. Blum insists he is there to be with her. He sits on the bed and begins to take off his shoes. Jenny has gone to the bathroom and calls back, "Ronnie you still owe me a birthday present. I was thinking we could go out this afternoon. I saw the most gorgeous dress."

"I cannot this afternoon," Blum says as he unties his shoe. "I am jammed packed. Sorry. I'll write you a check." Hearing the dress is $350 Blum is surprised but says if she can get a receipt he will put it through expenses.

"So what am I business or pleasure?" asks Jenny now standing in the door way. Blum calls her over and hugs her. They fall on the bed. [*Manek's musical potential is evident when Madame takes him on as a student with a full scholarship. Blum, the* *entertainment agent, is also interested in Manek's talents even after a most superficial hearing. But both teacher and agent are also aware that potential must be realized. And that is how Madame sees her role in her relationship with Manek. Madame points out that the body of the student embodies the musical gift. The body must be trained so that the gift embodied within the student is permitted to express itself. In the expression "you must let it play" Madame reveals the tension between the student, the teacher, and the discipline that brings them together. Madame demonstrates a resoluteness and determination that she knows the way to work within such a tension. Her approach features a certain understanding of the discipline at hand, and reflects her total commitment to her sense of vocation as a dedicated teacher of music students.*]

Scene 9. At home Manek is pouring over the piano as his mother works in the kitchen making samosas. From her fingers in the batter to his fingers on the piano and back again there seems to be a harmony at work.Sushila wipes her hands and walks across to Manek. There she gently moves Manek's back into a straighter position. She rubs his hair and smiles.

Scene 10. At Madame's Manek is playing the piano. "Stop. Stop," shouts Madame as she claps her hands. "How can the music flow through the body when you are so stiff. And what's this?" she pokes him in the back. "You're developing a hump like a camel. Oh you are such a sissy. That's enough for today. It is high time you began to work with Mr. Cordle downstairs." Manek reaches for his coat. "Come here," says Madame and Manek complies. "I want to show you something." She stands him in front of a full length mirror. "What do you see?"

"Me," replies Manek.

"Who is me?" questions Madame. "Is Manek a boy? Or do you aspire to something like this?" Madame points to the shelves of photos of famous pianists. "All dear friends of Mama. Every pianist who played at Carnegie Hall came to visit our apartment on Riverside Drive. Rubenstien. I sat on his lap and he made a little mouse out of a handkerchief for me.

And, of course, this is Mama in her heyday," as Madame points to a portrait of a stern-looking women dressed in black. "She was such a great pianist and teacher."

Manek reaches onto the shelf and picks up a frame which has been placed face down. "Who is this?" he questions.

"Just a student who wouldn't listen to me." Madame takes the photo and tosses it behind the rows of other pictures and picks up one more to show Manek. "This is what I want you to be like. My poor child come. Listen. What have I told you so many times. It is all one. The way we dress, the way we speak, and the way we play. It's all connected."

"Well I will see you Friday Madame Sousatzka," says Manek, but Madame corrects his pronunciation of her name. Down the stairs flies Manek and as he leaps he practices Madame's name. Once out the building Manek gets his roller skates from the back garden, but Lady Emily is there. "You wouldn't tell her would you? " asks Manek.

"No, no," whispers Lady Emily and she goes back to her plants. She points to a Jasmine plant and tells Manek it grows in his beautiful country. Manek replies that he wouldn't know since he has never been there and he scurries off. [*More of Madame's teaching methods are revealed. And all her methods to date, not surprisingly, reflect her understanding of a teacher's intentionality. Madame must be the one to establish the parameters for Manek's learning atmosphere. Madame's history, the photos of the past, the Sousatzka method, and the stress on the embodiment of gift all indicate her understanding of music, of students, and of herself as teacher. Madame's passion for music and skill with her discipline is respected by others. Her overwhelming determination and confidence with respect to her understanding of how music might be expressed properly may also seem rather possessive or dogmatic to others. But Madame knows what works.*]

Scene 11. At a department store in the men's clothing section, and a sales clerk takes a suit jacket off the rack. He turns bringing it to Manek and Madame. Madame rejects the jacket instantly saying she is looking for something more classic. The clerk tries again as Madame says to Manek, "Mama's family lost everything in the revolution."

"What revolution?" asks Manek.

"My dear boy you are ignorant. The Russian Revolution. Then they fled to Paris for ten years, and then to New York where Mama met Papa and where I grew up." The salesman brings another jacket which Madame also rejects. Manek in the meantime tries on a hat. "You see you need to develop style to go with those looks. Those beautiful looks," says Madame as she holds up a jacket. She tells the clerk that is the one she has selected. To Manek she says, "Manek thinks he will look silly? Nonsense, it will help make you a man." Then Madame tells the clerk to fetch some ties. "You see Mama only wore white until after Papa left then she only wore black because she felt like a widow even though he was living in the next block with a woman." She leads Manek to the changing room and he draws the curtain. "So after Papa left, Mama could not stay in New York. Then she was offered a position at the Royal College of Music so we moved on to London." Manek is in the change room looking at himself the mirror. Madame is outside looking at herself in a mirror. She asks Manek to come out. He peeks through the curtain and tells Madame he will be out when he is ready. He returns to looking at himself in the mirror.

"Oh everyone adored Mama at the Royal College," says Madame as Manek checks the mirror to see if he has any facial hair. "Her English was terrible, but everyone adored her Russian accent." Manek steps out and the clerk shows up with a tie. "No I want something vibrant," demands Madame. The clerk leaves again whispering under his breath. Madame tells Manek that she will take care of the bill. "Now I will teach you how to offer a lady your arm." The clerk mutters something about vibrant as he pulls a tie from the rack. Manek and Madame walk to the full length mirrors arm in arm. [*In this scene Madame reveals how her teaching approach is connected to her personal and cultural story. She begins to reveal herself by telling Manek, via biographical accounts, how she lived and presumably learned.*]

Scene 12. At home Sushila is laughing. Manek has his new jacket and tie on. He is posing in his room."What's so darn funny?" he asks of his mother.

Sushila continues to laugh. "Is that her idea of how a young man should dress? You can see she has never had any children."

"Ha. Ha. Ha." Manek slams his bedroom door. [*Sushila's challenge to Madame's dress suggestion for her son is based upon whether or not Madame has had children. This tension between parent and teacher is escalating. Sushila wonders if Madame has moved beyond the realm of what might be considered Madame's teaching responsibilities. Sushila is Manek's parent not Madame. But Madame is adamant that Manek must completely remake himself if he is become a successful pianist.*]

Scene 13. Manek, stripped to his underwear, is on Mr. Cordle's chiropractic table. "Don't think that pain is a permanent condition. Most definitely not. Nonsense. Then nothing ever is, is it? Permanent? Not pleasure nor pain," says Cordle as he works on Manek's body. From above they hear the thumping of Madame's walking stick on the floor as another pianist practices. "That's the human condition. Or should we say that is the condition of being human," says Cordle as he works on Manek's arms and we hear the piano music in the background. "You see Madame and Beethoven make your muscles go like this and I make them go like that," confirms Cordle as he gives Manek's neck a twist bringing out a loud crack. The thumping from above continues. "She really ought not to do that for her own sake," says Cordle.

Above Madame taps with a stick as her piano student practices. "Horrible. You don't know how to practice properly. A mess. It is simply a mess," comments Madame as she reaches the perfume atomizer and squirts herself and the room.

Later as the piano student and Manek leave the building the girl says, "I am going back to my old teacher. She is not a Madame. And her wonderful method! That perfume she uses. It makes me sick. What is that stuff? It makes me want to throw up every time she comes near me."

Manek says, "I like it."

"What? When she comes near you? Or her perfume? You must be corny. What is it called La Stink-aroo."

"No. No she's a teacher."

"No, she is a big hoax," says the girl. "Madame Stinkotzka."

Manek sits and puts on his skates as the girl asks if Madame knows he still uses the skates. [*There are two students and each has a different impression of Madame's teaching and her intentions for them as students. One student seems unwilling to accept Madame's intent for her, but the other appears ready to engage in an educative relationship. What is the difference here? Is Madame different with each student? Are the students different types of learners?*]

Scene 14. A photo of Lady Emily's deceased husband, and other photos, hang on the wall as Lady Emily looks at a locket in her hands. She crosses herself. Woodford and Lefranc (a city surveyor) approach and tap on Lady Emily's window. Upon entering Woodford introduces Lefranc as the local counsellor. Lefranc checks the walls as Woodford notices a photo and asks about it. "My great grandmother," says Lady Emily. "And this is Mr. Depesque. My spiritual leader," as she points to another photo. Lefranc still checks the damp walls and then he announces that the process required to fix the damp walls requires the skirting of house boards being pried off. Then there is an extensive re-plastering process followed by silicone injection installation. Woodford tells Lady Emily it is an expensive process. Lefranc agrees.

Madame and Manek are at the piano. There is a knock at the door. Lady Emily enters apologizing. Woodford and Lefranc are present also. Madame stops Manek's playing.

"I think you have met Mr. Woodford, and this is Mr. Lefranc from the Council."

Woodford goes to inspect the walls and tells Madame to continue as if they were not there. Madame's face is as hard as that of her mother in the photo behind her. Lefranc inspects the floor plans. He announces the studio should have been a bedroom. Madame puts on her glasses and takes the plans calling them ancient documents.

"This has been a studio for twenty years. My mother's, Elana Sousatzka's, and now mine." Lefranc says he hopes she has a permit to run a business from the premises.

"This is hardly a sweat-shop," replies Madame.

"That is not the point," says Lefranc. "You still need a commission."

Blum dashes out of Jenny's apartment pausing only to kiss her before continuing to run down the stairs. Blum sees Woodford and Lefranc coming out of Madame's studio. They ask if he is a tenant in the building. Blum replies he would not touch it with a ten foot pole. Lefranc and Woodford continue up the stairs. Blum pauses at the door to hear Manek who has resumed playing. Blum slips into the room, but Madame notices Blum and says, "You know where Jenny's flat is!" Blum leaves. Manek asks who that was. Madame says, "He calls himself an artist's agent. Snooping after my students." Manek returns to playing. "No, no," says Madame. "The message cannot come to the fingers if you do not open the body. Let me show you." She sits beside Manek and plays the piano. She tells Manek they will go over it on Saturday.

"I have got to help mother on Saturday," says Manek.

"I think you should be staying here on Fridays and Saturdays so we can work together. You can sleep there in the studio. The weekends belongs to me and to your piano."

Manek packs up his things.

"Your mother will have to get along without you," suggests Madame.

"But Saturday is a big day for her with all the deliveries."

"Well would you rather be a delivery boy than a pianist?" asks Madame with emotion. "Don't you think you should be playing on this rather than that apology for a piano your mother has for you at home."

Manek tosses down his books and shouts back, "It's not her fault she can't afford anything better."

"Well good heavens," says Madame. "Who said it was? I know she does the best for you. I know that. All I am saying is that you must not waste your weekends. You must not waste your weekends. You will stay here and work and work." Madame and Manek face each other. "These are precious years for you. All I am thinking of is what is right for you," says Madame as she touches Manek's chin. "It's you I am thinking of."

"Perhaps I could stay over Fridays sometimes," says Manek giving in somewhat.

"And Saturdays?" asks Madame.

"And Saturdays," says Manek grudgingly as he crunches a cookie Madame has offered him.

"Now go," says Madame. "And don't be wandering around the dark streets either." Manek leaves Madame's suite with her reminder, "Now Friday night tell your mother." Madame looks out her window smiling as Manek leaves the building. [*Manek is forced to juggle his respective roles as a ready and willing music student and as dutiful son when Madame makes increasingly obvious demands for more practice time. At times it almost seems as if Madame is taking on a motherly persona herself.*]

Scene 15. There is a banging of trash cans from the alley near Madame's studio. Several boys are beating a man. "You dirty queer ..." "Kick him ..." "We know what you are here for," they shout. Manek rushes over without hesitation. The boys rush off and Manek bends over the fallen man.

"Mr. Cordle?" says a surprised Manek. Mr. Cordle's face is bloodied. Manek helps Cordle up and asks if an ambulance is required. Cordle insists no. He tells Manek he simply stumbled. Cordle's eye and nose continue to bleed as Manek helps him home. Lady Emily notices them entering from her basement window. She puts down her teacup.

In his room Cordle is now cleaned up a little. Manek still wishes to call an ambulance as he bandages Cordle. Cordle again insists no and asks, "Do I look very hideous?"

"No."

Cordle replies, "Now dear boy you must be getting home. It is very late. Don't worry I shall be fine. Off you go."

Manek gets ready to go and Cordle says, "By the way don't tell Madame will you or Lady Emily? You know how hysterical women get over accidents." Manek nods and Cordle thanks him, but moments after Manek's departure Cordle quietly cries in pain.

"You are very late aren't you?" asks Lady Emily of Manek in the hallway. Manek explains he was doing a few things for Cordle. Lady Emily thanks Manek and moves past him to Cordle's door. She knocks and Cordle tells her to come in. As she does Cordle turns from her.

"I hope I am not disturbing you? I would like to talk to you about the house," says Lady Emily. "The Council says it is unsafe." She quickly notices Cordle's head bandage. "What happened to your face?" she asks.

"I fell outside."

"It is really nasty," says Lady Emily. She says she should get a doctor but Cordle again insists no. "You really should be more careful. London isn't the place it was in our youth. At our age it is not safe to walk in the street especially after dark." Lady Emily then goes on to say how much she would enjoy a little place in the country, and that perhaps she should sell the house. [*Manek demonstrates a real sense of caring for others. In helping Cordle, Manek must surely know what has happened and why Cordle was beaten. However, Manek's tactful approach ensures Cordle can retain some dignity. Manek's help is bounded by that concern. Not only is Manek a good music student he also seems to be a remarkable student of life as well as progressively becoming the condition of possibility for others to learn something about themselves.*]

Scene 16. A young man in an overcoat approaches Lady Emily's house. He rings the bell. Then says softly to himself, "Door's open. Always open."

In black cape Madame descends the stairs. Madame goes rigid when sees the young man at the door is Edward. "You have come to see Lady Emily and Mr. Cordle?" she asks.

"I have come to see you," says Edward.

"You don't need to see me Edward," says Madame as she dashes past him. "Congratulations on your great success," she adds as she dashes out the door.

Scene 17. Sushila is on the couch and Manek is in his room. The door is open. "Manek?" calls Sushila.

"What do you want?"

Sushila complains she has a backache. Manek reluctantly puts down packing his clothes and goes to his mother. Sushila reclines on the couch. Manek sits beside her and begins to massage her back and shoulders. Sushila moans. Manek stops. He tells her he is tired. Sushila counters that he never got tired before. She touches his shoulder. Manek gets up from the couch and goes back to his room. He shuts the door.

Sushila sits up and clutches a pillow. The music is sad. Sushila looks once more to Manek's room. She approaches the door and opens it. Manek is in his shorts and he scrambles to cover himself. Sushila sits on Manek's bed. He put his pants on and Sushila tells Manek to be home by seven.

"I told you I am staying over tonight."

But Sushila has promised a neighbor she and Manek would go to visit. Then she asks him if her friends aren't good enough for him as opposed to the people in "that house". Manek continues to get ready. His mother says a prayer for Manek and puts a ribbon around his sleeve to ward off the evil eye, and "the spell she has cast on him." Manek removes the ribbon and leaves his house. He puts on his roller blades and heads down the road. [*Manek demonstrates his ability to resist both his mother's and Madames' increasing desires to dominate his life. He attempts to convince his mother that her growing* *jealousy of Madame is unfounded. But he also chooses to ignore Madame's pleas to give up his roller skates. In his ability to juggle the two competing women Manek possesses a certain quality of strength.*]

Scene 18. The table at Madame's is ornately decorated with china and candles. All the house's tenants are gathered around. All that is except Jenny.

"This is Mama's recipe," says Madame at the head of the table as everyone fills their plates. "The English know nothing about food."

"You should not be going to all this trouble on your birthday," says Cordle.

"I hope those two terrible men don't come and interrupt us," says Lady Emily.

"They cannot make you lose the house you were born in," says Madame. "Manek do not eat like a Barbarian."

"It is the people I mind losing. I don't want to lose my little family. Isn't she coming?" asks Lady Emily noticing Jenny's absence.

Manek also asks, "Isn't Jenny coming?"

"I say to Jenny you must learn to be absolutely on time with me," says Madame as she pours more wine. "And she says that's because I have a rising ascendency of Capricorn."

Lady Emily adds she is also a Capricorn.

Madame replies, "The Zodiac is nonsense. I control my life not the stars." Madame then corrects Manek who reaches for some wine, "Listen stupid boy the white wine goes with the fish and red wine with the meat. You must learn to become a man." She raises her glass as does Manek and they clink glasses.

"To our family," is Madame's toast and all clink glasses just as Jenny rushes in. She apologizes for being late and then grabs Manek and tells everyone she needs him. Over Madame's protests that he must ask the lady of the house before he leaves the table Manek is already gone at Jenny's request. Lady Emily and Madame laugh, but Madame looks up at the ceiling.

There is a cake with a ribbon over the icing saying, "Invest in time." Jenny rips it off and replaces it with a Happy Birthday button. As Jenny does this Manek looks at Jenny's commercial photos hanging on her walls.

"They are great," says Manek. Jenny acknowledges Manek's compliment about the photos and tells him she got the cake from a bank commercial she just finished.

"Are you a model?" asks Manek.

"Not really. I am a singer. I write my own songs." Jenny points to a demo record. Manek reaches for it but she plays with him by keeping it away from him. Manek ends up getting the record but not without putting his arm around Jenny. Jenny reminds Manek he is supposed to be helping her.

"Did it sell many copies?" asks Manek. Jenny tells Manek it got to number 94 for a week. She lights the candles and Manek helps. They laugh about the number of candles. As Jenny carries the cake down the stairs Manek asks how old Madame is. Jenny does not answer so he asks her how old she is.

"How old do you think I am?

"Twenty."

"Ya twenty!" smiles Jenny as she and Manek return to the party.

Madame blows out the candles and everyone cheers. Cordle pours more champagne and Madame pulls a flower from the center piece and places it behind her left ear. Everyone is joyous as they eat and drink. Lady Emily smiles, Jenny laughs, and Cordle pounds the table with his fork.

"A moment everybody," says Cordle. "Once again on this great day I give you our dear friend, a kind hostess, our great pianist and pedagogue, Madame Irena." Everyone raises their glasses and cheers of joy fill the air. "A celestial woman in the heroic mould. I hear her voice, not to put too fine a point on it, bellowing at her students."

"Mr. Cordle. I am as gentle as a dove," says Madame as Manek and Jenny whisper together. "Manek," says Madame getting his attention and placing her hand over his.

Cordle continues, "In her blood is the strength of America, her spirit born by the mighty winds that sweep the steppes of Russia. And yet as light and heady as this champagne." Everyone drinks as Manek and Jenny continue to smile at each other. Madame is keeping an eye on Jenny and Manek. "May we always meet and eat together on this great day wherever we may be," summarizes Cordle.

"Where would we be but here?" asks Madame. Madame gets up and Jenny takes a photo with her Polaroid camera. Jenny and Manek look at the developing picture and Lady Emily pulls a package from the floor. "This is for you Irena. From Edward. From Edward with love," adds Lady Emily. Madame opens the box and it is a large photo which she places on the table face down.

Manek picks it up and asks, "Rachmaninoff?" And he adds,"Who is Edward?"

Lady Emily coughs one of those "no no" coughs. And Cordle asks for another plate from Jenny. Jenny also passes the bottle to Cordle and in doing so taps a glass. The note resonates for a moment.

"B-flat," says Manek.

"He has perfect pitch," adds Madame.

Jenny taps another glass. "A" says Manek, and then "B-flat," "G-sharp" and "F" as several glasses are tapped. Manek then rises and goes to the piano. In the candlelight he plays. Jenny approaches the piano quietly and takes a photo of Manek and they exchange glances. Madame notices and rises to leave Cordle and Lady Emily at the table.

"Let him play. Let him play," says Madame to Jenny. Madame moves to stand behind Manek and then reaches around him to place a music book before Manek. Cordle and Lady Emily smile as Jenny joins them. At the piano Madame sits with Manek and they begin to play together. Their music flows and they smile at each other. Everyone is enthralled by the music. The room has a magic feeling flowing from the candles, piano, flowers, and photos. All fades into the piano keys and open music book. [*This extended scene offers another look at the tensions in Madame's personal and professional life.*

Madame makes a statement about being in control of her own life. She laughs at the suggestion that the stars might have some influence in a person's life. Yet for a person who assumes to control her own life, Madame seems to live a very marginalized existence. She is secluded in a run-down house and is surrounded with what mainstream society would consider as marginalized people. There is a struggling singer who is exploited sexually as she attempts to peddle both herself and her songs, an older single man who is a closet homosexual, and an elderly, very lonely, widowed woman. And yet in contrast Cordle also offers a vision of Madame as a person in the heroic Greek tradition. Cut from the heroic mould Madame certainly seems to have risen, from time to time, to great heights as a pedagogue. But a heroic figure in the Greek tragedy suffers a fall as great as his or her accomplishments. Often the fall was pre-determined as the result of some tragic flaw inherent in the character's personality make-up. The flaw had been initially concealed by character strengths but eventually the flaw must reveal itself. If this is the case, what is Madame's flaw as a person and as a music teacher?]

Scene 20. The keys are now silent and the studio is dark. The music lingers then is gone. Madame enters the studio and stoops to put blankets on Manek as he sleeps. Manek stirs and rolls over to see Madame, dressed in an old house coat, at the piano. She picks up one piano book and smiles. But instantly she frowns as she looks at another piano book with a score from Schubert. She quickly turns the book face down and places a score by Beethoven on top.

Madame looks at the piano which suddenly seems to come alive. Madame puts her hand to her mouth. In a voice over Madame's mother is heard to say, "You think you play a concert?" The flashback proper begins with a focus on a poster advertising a concert and a young Madame Sousatzka is featured on the poster. Suddenly the poster is ripped in half by Mama--a stern, frowning woman dressed in black. Back in the present Madame continues to cover her mouth and then she closes her eyes. When she opens her eyes Manek sits up in his bed. He looks at her. Madame turns and looks over her shoulder at the portrait of her hawk-like mother. She turns back and notices Manek. She smiles and says, "Did you have a good time?" Manek smiles and nods.

Madame says, "This is the day that I miss Mama. Mostly. Most. The most, most of all." [*After Cordle's words there is a pleasing image of Manek and Madame being drawn together to play the piano beautifully. After the party there is a flashback by Madame to her youth. The young Madame is presented as a music student, and her mother is the demanding music teacher. Madame's mother as her music teacher suggests directly that Madame may never be ready to play a performance concert. Then back as a teacher herself, Madame not only must come to face her present relationship with her students,but also her past unresolved relationship with her mother-teacher.*]

Scene 21. Sushila drives up in an expensive car. She tells her companion, who is about to get out, to wait for her. He gets out and stands in front of the car. Sushila walks up the stairs and rings the bell twice. She then walks back to the bottom of the front steps and looks up at Madame's window. "Babu?" she calls. A light comes on and Manek comes to the window and looks out. He turns quickly to come downstairs. Sushila walks toward the house again. Manek frantically runs down the stairs putting on his shirt while rushing to the front door.

"This better be important," says Manek as his mother stands before him.

"I brought your shampoo." She holds up the bottle.

"I don't believe it. You are mad?" asks Manek.

Sushila steps into the doorway, but Manek doesn't step back. "Who is that?" he asks looking at Sushila's companion. "Isn't that that fat Sunil?" His mother does not respond but pushes past Manek. He dashes after her stopping only to shut the door. Sushila indicates someone has to keep her company.

"Where are you sleeping? Which room?" asks Sushila as she surveys the lobby. Manek grabs her arm and she turns to face him, and she says, "Breathe on me. You have been drinking?"

Manek pulls from her and says, "So what!"

"She is supposed to teach you how to play the piano not how to drink. Your father did enough of that." Sushila bolts to go upstairs, but Manek again grabs her arm. Then Madame appears at the top of the stairs.

"I hope nothing has happened?" asks Madame.

"No my mother just came to give me my shampoo," says Manek shyly.

"Well how thoughtful. But at one o'clock in the morning?" asks Madame.

"Well if he doesn't use his very special shampoo his hair gets into terrible tangles," says Sushila as she touches Manek's hair and he quickly pulls back.

Madame says, "If it is no crisis perhaps we could go back to sleep. Manek you have a hard day tomorrow. You need all the rest you can get. Good night Madame," says Madame. She turns to leave then adds, "The door closes by itself. There is no need to slam it. People are sleeping." She returns to her apartment leaving Manek and Sushila in the lobby.

Sushila says to Manek, "Don't you dare let her give you any liquor. I will tell her myself," and again she begins up the stairs. "A boy of your age."

Manek grabs her arm and says, "Go home."

Madame has not quite reached her apartment when she overhears Sushila say, "At your age. She must be crazy." But Manek manages to move her to the doorway.

Sushila goes grudgingly and as she does she slams the door. Outside she calls back to Manek.

"Babu. I forgot this." She hands the shampoo to Manek.

Manek smiles. "I will be home Sunday," he says. He suggests they could go to a movie then. Sushila strokes his face and tells Manek to take care. She leaves with her companion. Manek closes the door. [*The struggle continues between the mother and the teacher for the son and the student. The mother's relationship with her son is strong. The relationship is direct and given even more importance by mother and son because she is the* *only parent. Yet the educative relation between Madame and Manek is also becoming increasingly stronger. But this educative relation is not as direct as the mother-son relationship. There is the teacher, the student, and third element is the discipline, in this case music. The subject matter of music is that which specifically draws Manek to Madame. And it is music that Sushila feels is drawing Manek from her influence as a parent. Manek seems caught between the two people in his life he needs in order to become what he desires. His mother emphatically desires Manek to be a concert pianist. For that reason she wants him to benefit from Madame's teaching. But in order to have Madame teach him he must move from his mother's influence to that of Madame's. And a significant part of Madame's influence seems to be for her to act as if she were his parent. The problem is both Madame and Sushila feel the other is operating from a position of mixed motives.*]

Scene 22. At a piano recital sits Ronnie Blum. Also in attendance, in a different seating area, is Manek and Madame. Madame casts a sideways glance at Leo Milev (a rival piano teacher) seated across the aisle. Madame looks at Manek then back at Leo who smiles and nods. Madame again looks straight ahead. Manek's hands vibrate as the music continues. It is as if he is playing the piano. Madame smiles. As the music continues Madame seems to become self-absorbed. She blinks and clutches her throat. The voice over returns and as she closes her eyes she is taken back via a flashback to the young Sousatzka and her mother. As the young Sousatzka plays the piano her mother pounds on a walking stick yelling at her daughter. Back to the present and to Madame at the recital. She closes her eyes again and is suddenly back as young Sousatzka. Dressed in a blue gown she walks on to the stage. She crosses to the piano and sits. Back to the present in the concert hall. Madame blinks constantly as the pianist plays on. She again closes her eyes. Her hands are tightly entangled in her necklace. The young Sousatzka is now at the piano. She begins to play. Her hands move over the keys. In the background her mother is seated in the front row. In the present Madame opens her eyes and looks at the pianist. She entangles her beads even tighter. The young Sousatzka plays on; suddenly she freezes. She stops playing. There is a look of terror on Madame's face. The young Sousatzka shakes her head and bolts from the piano after slamming down the cover. In the present, Madame, with eyes closed, continues to twist her beads with both hands. The pianist concludes his piece. As Madame is jolted back to reality and she begins to applaud her torn beads splatter on the floor. The audience's explosion of clapping covers the sound of bouncing beads as they hit the floor. As the performer bows, Madame motions to Manek to help her gather up the broken beads. Leo also puts some beads in his pocket without Madame noticing.

The after concert reception is lively. Madame hugs the concert pianist. Manek is at her side. "Courageous. Completely courageous," says Madame to the pianist. She is about to introduce Manek when she is taken aside by a friend to meet someone else.

Blum is at the party. He is in conversation until he sees Manek alone. Blum approaches Manek who is standing beside the pianist. Blum shakes the pianist's hand and quickly asks the pianist to autograph a program. From a distance Madame notices Blum, the pianist, and Manek together. Blum then hands the program to Manek and leading him aside says, "If you want to get to the front you got to be pushy. Ronnie Blum," says Blum offering his hand.

"Manek Sen." They shake hands.

Leo Milev is nearby and Blum calls him over to meet Manek.

"This is Leo Milev. One of the truly great piano teachers of the world," says Blum of Leo. And to Leo of Manek, Blum says, "This is Manek. He is a man with a big future." Leo offers his left hand to Manek who awkwardly shakes it with his right. Blum tells Manek he should sit in on one of Leo's master classes. Madame strains from a distance to see Blum, Milev and Manek. Leo offers Manek several of Madame's beads he recovered from the floor.

"I believe these are hers. She might not like to take them from me. She still has not forgiven me because of Edward," says Leo.

Manek discovers that Edward left Madame to become one of Leo's students. At this moment Edward is in Ottawa playing a concert. Blum offers Manek his card. Madame sees this and, offering her excuses to her friends, comes over to Blum and Manek. "It's really time to go Manek," says Madame. "Will you excuse us?" Madame takes Manek by the arm and they leave. As Madame and Manek walk she asks, "What did he say to you, Mr. Ronnie Blum?"

"He wants to hear me play."

"What did you say to him?" asks Madame as they walk.

"That he would have to talk to you."

"You are quite right," says Madame.

They continue to walk, and as they do Manek asks,"Is Blum Jenny's boyfriend?" Madame does not answer but stops at the bottom of the stairs. She points to the promotional poster of the pianist they have just heard. With her finger on the poster Madame says, "He will not last five minutes because a greedy agent got hold of him and started him much too early. I have seen it happen before. Over and over again. Fail once and they drop you like a hot potato." She walks on and points to another photo. "This is one of Leo Milev's students. I saw you talking to Leo," says Madame. "What did he say?"

Manek offers Madame a bead and she puts it in her purse. "Frankly I don't like him but I feel sorry for him," says Madame. "In the middle of a good career he lost the use of his arm. What else did he have to say? Did he talk about Edward? What else did he say?"

"He said to give you the beads."

"They all think I still care about Edward," says Madame. She continues to walk with Manek at her side. "Where is Edward now?" she asks as they leave the concert hall. Manek says he is playing a concert in Ottawa. Madame makes a comment about Edward's inability to play certain pieces. They continue to leave the hall area. [*The flashbacks continue and suggest that Madame's failure as a concert pianist are still unresolved. Many questions begin to surface regarding her past and present relationship with her mother. The* *difficultly of Madame not facing that relationship seems to be influencing her intentions for her students in the present. Edward, as the absent but still influential former student, begins to be fleshed out in terms of the relationship he had and has with Madame. What happened to Edward's educative relationship with Madame? How and why did he break from her? Will Manek do the same? Is Madame becoming as possessive of Manek as she has accused Manek's mother of being? Also of interest here is the image of the music teachers. Leo is physically impaired. Madame seems to have an emotional impairment. Is it true that those that do do, and those that cannot teach?*]

Scene 23. Madame sits in front of her mirror at home. She opens her desk drawer and sweeps in the broken beads. She picks up a photo and turns it over. It is of Edward. She flips it over again and continues to look through the desk. She takes out a taped-up copy of a photo of herself as a young pianist. "Potman Hall. Sousatzka," reads the concert program. Madame runs her hand over the photo, then she looks in the mirror. She folds the program and draws it over her face. She sighs and sprays herself with perfume. Fade to black. [*The evidence continues to increase suggesting that Madame must come to face her past because it has not been resolved as yet in her present life. Edward and perhaps increasingly Manek are drawing Madame to the need to question and respond to the questions flowing from her personal and professional life.*]

Scene 24. Blum comes up the stairs. He knocks at Madame's door. Madame is at the typewriter pecking out a letter. Blum enters her studio as the typing continues. "Madame Sousatzka?" he questions. Madame is startled, and Blum insists he knocked. He says, "I am glad to catch you alone for a moment. Would you care to join me for a spot of lunch?"

"I am extremely busy Mr. Blum," replies Madame.

"Then I will come straight to the point. I would like to hear Manek play," says Blum as he faces Madame across the room.

"That is impossible," says Madame. She adds, "Quite impossible. Manek is no concern of yours."

"But why? You teach him to play. I, how to make a living."

"Making a living as you put it Mr. Blum is not what music is all about. And I have a rule that not one of my students will appear in public before he or she is ready."

Blum then asks, "I see and who decides when that is?"

"I decide," says Madame emphatically. "In every case and in this case especially."

Blum smiles and turns to her collection of photos in the wall cabinet. He names several of the pianists. Blum remembers hearing one of the pianists at Albert Hall when he, himself, was four years old.

"You see we all have music in our blood in a sense Mr. Blum. Even you. All of our great grandmothers played Chopin."

"Well actually mine ironed shirts down Mylane Road," says Blum.

"Manek's great grandmother played the Sitar or some such instrument," says Madame. "And so now he has to catch up on six hundred years of European music."

"Well I am afraid I cannot wait that long."

"Perhaps you shouldn't wait at all." Manek enters the room.

"Manek," says Madame. "Good. You are here. Mr. Blum was just leaving."

"Hi. How are you?" asks Blum. "Nice to see you again." They shake hands. "I was just telling Madame how very much I would like to hear you play." Manek notices Madame behind Blum gesturing no.

Manek sees it but asks Blum, "What did you want to hear?"

"Madame says I can't," says Blum. Madame puts her hand on her hip in defiance.

"Why?" asks Manek.

"She forbids it," says Blum.

"Why can't I play for Mr. Blum?" asks Manek as he walks over to Madame. She glares at Manek as Blum moves toward the piano where he sits in a large chair.

"Alright then play," shouts Madame. "Play. Play for anyone." Manek moves to the piano. "Play in the street for all I care. Don't let me stop you," says Madame as she gets her cape. "There is no need at all to consider my wishes or my feelings." Manek is seated at the piano. "And go on sit in Mama's chair," shouts Madame to Blum. She swirls her cape about her in a dramatic way and leaves.

Manek rolls his eyes. Blum motions to Manek to play.

On the stairs Madame stops after the first landing. The piano music starts. She pauses and looks up. Manek begins playing. On the piano is the octopus toy and the cookie tin. On the wall hangs a large hand demonstration chart called "the Pinch--the Sousatzka system". Madame is still on the stairs as she listens. Several tears flow from Madame's eyes. She puts her head back against the railing. [*Madame is committed, and perhaps over-committed, to the discipline of music as a pure art form. Musical expression requires rigorous training, as well as a pianist's desire to be true to his or her art. Only through an approach that seeks to embody mind, body and soul with skilled training can that connection be retained. On the other hand, Blum is committed, perhaps over-committed, to a vision of music as entertainment. Music is a commodity to be marketed. The pianist is a music producer requiring management. Manek's life situation and his mother's economic status dictates that Manek must bring his art form to an audience. When Manek decides to play for Blum, Madame's temper tantrum illustrates her refusal to face her responsibilities with respect to her student as performer. But it is interesting to note that Madame only retreats as far as the stairs. The music keeps her close as does her desire for a relationship with her student. But with Edward, and now increasingly with Manek, Madame must face the pressing questions of her pedagogical intent for her students. And how is that intent influenced by her past-present relationship with her own teacher-mother? Will Madame be able to be responsive to the questions she seems increasingly required to face? Is Madame's relationship with her students dominated by mixed motives?*]

Scene 25. Several boys on roller skates are doing spinning circles in front of a group of students in the school yard. Manek is in the crowd. Some friends push him into the circle.

He skates in and does some spinning moves as the others clap and cheer. But he falls and hurts his left wrist.

Scene 26. Sushila is on the phone. In front of her are stacks of food boxes. "He has the fever Madame Sousatzka," says Sushila. Manek is seated at the piano, but he is wearing a heavily taped cast-like bandage."He is on antibiotics. I will tell him you called. Good bye."

"What did she say?" asks Manek as his mother picks up a pile of boxes.

"I do not know why you cannot tell her?" asks his mother.

"If she knew it was my hand. She is mad enough at me as it is," says Manek.

"Mad alright, completely cuckoo," says Sushila.

Scene 27. Sushila and Manek enter the department store that Sushila supplies food to. Sushila puts the boxes on the counter, and is told she must see Mr. Beechy, the store manager. Beechy is at his desk. Sushila sits opposite Beechy while Manek waits at the door. Mr. Beechy tells Sushila that the food she supplied to the store was returned by a most valued customer because there was a hair in it.

"I cannot imagine how it got there," says Sushila as Beechy holds up a long hair. Sushila feels her neck. Manek still stands at the door. Sushila informs Beechy it will not happen again and he counters that it is the last warning.

"Yes, so kind of you," says Sushila who gets up. She introduces Manek her son the concert pianist. Sushila and Manek leave Beechy standing at his desk flicking the hair. As they leave the store Sushila says," Stupid old man."

"You nearly got the sack. And the kitchen is bloody filthy. Tomorrow you and me are going to clean it up."

Sushila says, "You are all talk."

Scene 28. Sushila and Manek sit at the table savoring a meal. Downstairs Mrs. Ahuja and her friends are watching an Indian movie when the door bell rings. Mrs. Ahuja answers it to find Madame Sousatzka there. Madame says, "I am looking for Manek and Mrs. Sen." Madame has flowers.

"Yes, Mrs. Sen and Manek are upstairs."

Madame goes up and rings the bell for Sushila's suite. As Sushila goes to the door she sees it is Madame and whispers back to Manek that it is Madame. He tries to hide his cast.

"What a surprise. He will be so pleased," says Sushila admitting Madame.

"How is he?" questions Madame.

Sushila tells Madame Manek's temperature is down. Then Sushila admires the flowers Madame has brought for Manek. Madame takes the opportunity to name the varieties of flowers in the bouquet. Sushila apologizes for the mess in the apartment. Manek stands with his hand behind his back. Sushila takes the flowers to Manek.

Madame says to Manek, "Your mother tells me you are feeling better? Well come here. Let me see." Manek slowly walks over and as Madame hugs him she notices his wrist. She is shocked.

"What is this? What happened?" Quickly Manek unwraps his wrist as Madame asks, "Why was I told lies? I despise deceit. Why did you have your mother tell me lies?"

"It was just a little white lie. We knew you would be so upset.

Manek adds, "There is not even a bruise."

Madame pulls him toward her and asks, "You did it with football or some such sport?" She sits still holding his hand. "It was from these skates? Was it? You promised me you would never ... never ...."

Sushila interjects telling Madame the skates were a birthday present and they save bus fare.

Not hearing a word Madame requests that Manek promise never to skate again. Sushila bristles as Madame asks Manek if he will throw the skates away. At this point Sushila tells Manek to go wash his hands. Madame pulls out a bag and tells Manek she has bought him some books and he is to begin with *Crime and Punishment*. Sushila is becoming increasingly agitated. Manek takes the book and thanks Madame.

"Isn't it terrible the way they always stay babies? Running here and there," says Madame as she is about to open another package for Manek. "They do this. They don't do that."

Sushila finally tosses down the food she has been gathering up. There is wrapping paper on the floor which Sushila snatches up. She says to Madame, "I wanted to ask you Madame Sousatzka when will he be ready to give a concert?"

"He has talked to you about that has he?" asks Madame.

"No he hasn't. I am asking you about it." Manek has now returned from the washroom.

Madame says to him, "Manek, you should explain to your mother. I thought she understood but apparently not."

Manek moves to his mother's side and asks, "Explain what?"

"I asked when you are going to play a concert," says Sushila.

Manek looks at her. "Oh I know I am just ignorant of course. I am not a perfect music teacher just another mother. It is what we have been planning and working for all these years."

"Who is we?"

"My son and I," answers Sushila .

"Let it alone," Manek interjects.

"What about all the concerts. Why have I been slaving and saving?"

Madame says, "Mrs. Sen. I will be frank with you. Manek's playing is immature. He doesn't think before he plays. Sometimes he shows off. He simply is not strong enough yet to communicate with an audience."

Sushila is stunned, "You mean he is not good enough?"

"I didn't say that. I said he is not ready. We just have to wait and see," adds Madame.

"And in the meantime what am I suppose to do? With all the debts I have to pay?"

"Are you saying this boy should give up his talents? His God-given talents to pay your debts?" asks Madame.

"My debts!" says Sushila. "Are they just my debts?"

Manek now interjects between the two woman and shouts, "Stop it!"

"No, really," continues Sushila, "Are they just my debts?"

"OK. They are mine too," says Manek.

There is a moment of silence. Then Madame says to Manek, "See you tomorrow at the usual time." She steps between Sushila and Manek to leave. "Please do not forget to put the flowers into water," she says to Sushila as she goes out passing the flowers on the table.

Manek turns and goes after Madame. He catches her at the taxi and asks, "Madame Sousatzka. Did you really mean that? Did you?" But the taxi pulls out and Manek is left standing there.

The flowers hit the trash can. Sushila says, "I am glad." Manek has returned and is sitting at the table with his left hand spread out on the cutting board. With his right hand he holds a knife which he is jabbing down between the spaces of each finger on his left hand. "It is high time you gave a concert," says Sushila. Manek continues to move the knife blade between his fingers in a game-like fashion of dare. Sushila continues to get to the wrapping paper littered about the room venting her anger about Madame and her desire for Manek to do a concert. Manek continues to pound the knife between his fingers as quickly as he can. Suddenly Sushila notices what Manek is doing and rushes over to stop him. She breaks into her mother language as she scolds Manek. She says, "Does she own you? And what does she think I am? Nobody? Nothing?" Manek gets up from the table. "I am not allowed to speak," says Sushila. Manek picks up a musical score. Sushila continues, "And why do you have to stay there every Friday. You can stay and practice at home."

Manek replies that he needs Madame's classic grand piano.

"I am sorry I have no more jewelry to sell for you," says Sushila as she throws her hands up and turns to walk out. "It's all gone." She goes to her bedroom and she goes through her dresser drawers. She returns to Manek, "Here is your grandmother's wedding necklace. May I sell that as well?"

Manek replies, "I am sick of it." He bolts from the kitchen to the door.

Sushila suddenly changes tone, "Babu, don't go please." She catches Manek at the door and says, "Sorry, it is only because I love you so much."

Manek steps back inside and says, "You got a funny way of showing it."

"Please come back." Manek shuts the door and walks in as she puts her hand on the back of his neck and they walk into living room together. She reaches for a package and pulls out a shirt. "I bought this for you--a present." She holds the shirt up to Manek and turns him to face the mirror. He smiles. "You look beautiful. You are beautiful. Like your father. That's something I cannot take away from that bastard."

Manek says, "Oh don't start that."

Sushila insists, "I am not starting again." [*The struggle for Manek reaches new heights and intensities when Madame demands that Manek must be an artist and live exclusively for his music. According to Madame this desire to be a pianist can only be obtained with her guidance. Sushila also makes demands of Manek . She wants him to use his gift to better their life socially, financially, and personally. The debate over control of Manek's life, between Madame and Sushila, seems to have become one between two mothers claiming one child. Each woman has a different and seemingly legitimate vision and intent for the boy. What becomes apparent in the women's struggles over Manek is their own self-concerns. Madame is so caught up in the notion of a musical gift and demands for compliance from Manek she refuses to even listen to Sushila. Sushila is so intent on setting Madame straight that she does not even notice her son is dangerously playing with a knife. He is endangering his existence as an artist. Intentionality, again,* *seems to become a question of: in whose interest is this specific course of action? But still the question should be: what is good for Manek?*.]

Scene 29. In Blum's office his secretary answers the phone. Vincent Pick (a colleague of Blum's) has a poster in hand which reads: "Heaton Park Music Festival." Blum is on the phone. Pick reminds Blum, after the call, that they need one more act for the festival. "At the moment I am trying for the London Symphony," replies Blum. Pick agrees that would be very good. Blum's secretary has a message for Blum from his wife. Blum tells the secretary he will call her later at home. Then Blum tells Pick about a young pianist he would really like to use at the festival. He shows Pick Manek's picture which was taken by Jenny at Madame's birthday party. "He is only 15, charismatic, and intense. Look at him. His mother does catering. Does Indian food."

"You mean she is part of the package," comments Pick.

Blum laughs. Then wonders if that is not worth a second thought. As the men talk Jenny enters Blum's office downstairs. Pick's attention is taken by Jenny as she comes up to Blum's office. Jenny has a lunch date, but Blum is on the phone again. Pick tells her it is a busy time. Jenny suggests that it is always a busy time. She goes back down to the secretary's desk. Blum gets off the phone long enough to tell Pick that Jenny is a pop singer but her real talents are in other directions. The phone rings again and Pick goes down to speak with Jenny. Pick introduces himself and suggest to Jenny he hear her demo tapes. Then he suggests they do it now at his office, but have lunch along the way. Jenny looks up at Blum who is still on the phone and decides to go with Pick. As they leave Pick uses his cellular phone to call ahead for a lunch reservation. [*Is this scene to show the exploitive nature of the entertainment business?*]

Scene 30. Manek is at the piano at Madame's. He has his new shirt on that his mother gave him. Madame is not around so he plays some pop music on the piano and occasionally tosses a potato chip into his mouth. He stops playing and goes to the window. A car pulls up. Through the curtain Manek sees Jenny get out of Pick's car.

"Get that tape over to me and I will hear it," says Pick.

"Ya sure. Like all the others," says Jenny. She gets out slamming the door and dashes inside. The car drives off.

Manek moves from the window and goes into the hall. He then goes up to Jenny's flat. He enters calling out Jenny's name.

"Who is it?" questions Jenny.

"It is me," says Manek. "I brought you back the single."

"Just put it on the table," instructs Jenny from the bedroom.

Manek does so. Then he looks around as Jenny enters in a long tee-shirt. She is bare legged. Manek asks about the car that dropped her off. Jenny is angry and makes a comment about the little privacy in this house. She begins to put on a pair of jeans.

"Sorry you just cannot miss a car like that," says Manek.

Jenny is still upset and when she has trouble putting on her jeans she slaps her thigh and says, "Oh shit." She collapses on the bed with her hands over her face. She weeps.

Manek sits beside her. He puts his arm around her. "You want to know something Manek. Forget about the music business. Just do your school stuff and get yourself a good job," says Jenny to Manek as she rubs his new jacket shirt. She adds, "This is lovely. It is so soft. You better go or Madame will be after me." She moves to the window and wipes her eyes.

Manek tells Jenny he would like to visit again and adds, "The single's brilliant and I told everyone I know to buy it." Jenny is now smiling and tells Manek to go. [*Jenny tries to offer Manek advice and Manek tries to offers hope and a sense of caring for others. Jenny's desire to be a success in the music industry is exploited by those like Peck and Blum. But Madame may be right about Jenny's level of talent. However, Manek's talent is another matter. His giftedness draws to him those who would want to use that talent, but the talent itself also protects Manek as a valuable commodity. Manek has the gift that Jenny* *does not. As long as he has that gift then at least in some ways Manek might be able to influence how others are seeking to influence him.*]

Scene 31. Madame comes through the studio door and seizing her perfume sprays herself. She then hears Jenny's door close. Manek comes down the stairs and into Madame's suite. He waves his hand to dissipate the strongly perfumed air.

"What are you wearing?" asks Madame.

Manek does not answer but gets some music from the table and goes to the piano. Madame joins him at the piano. "Jenny is a good-hearted girl I am sure. But I am afraid she has no talent. Poor girl it cannot be easy for her. Do you know how old she is? Oh never mind," says Madame as she moves from Manek who begins playing the piano. Madame then says to Manek, "Remember the talk we had about the wholeness of music. Whatever you do matters. Well it also includes the friends you make. Friends at school. Girls. Women. Whatever. You need to discriminate. It also includes what you wear. You need to discriminate." Madame moves over and pokes at Manek's shirt.

"Someone gave it to me, " says Manek. He pounds his hands down on the keys.

"No," says Madame as she puts her hands on his. "No, Beethoven wasn't angry when he wrote this." She plays several chords and then moves off. "Who gave it to you?"

"My mother," says Manek playing. Madame is at the end of the piano and Manek sweeps a broken potato chip under the piano and out of Madame's vision. Madame has made her way to the cookie tin. She puts more cookies in the tin. She smiles at the music Manek is making. "It plays," says Madame.

"I play," corrects Manek.

Then she frowns. Suddenly she approaches him from behind saying, "What did I tell you? So there still is something left to learn Mr. Know-it-all. No." She bends over Manek and their fingers meet on the keys. Madame plays several bars and then pulls Manek's hair back from his face. "And you need a hair cut," says Madame.

Later in the practice Madame shouts, "Elephant, elephant. And do you think you are ready to play in public? This is all you are good for." She flicks the metronome. Again she plays for Manek to imitate. "And have you read any of the books I have given you? Have you even opened one of them?"

Manek is now pounding the keys. Finally he jumps up and shouts at Madame, "Fuck your culture." Madame recoils in shock. Manek continues, "It's all these dead creeps looking at me when I play." He points to Madame's photos.

"You will never belong there. You will never belong with them. You are ignorant and uneducated."

Manek begins to pack his bag and calls back to Madame, "Well at least I am not dead." He barges out knocking over a photo.

"Run that is the easiest way for cowards and failures," shouts Madame. Manek rushes down the stairs as Madame continues to shout about his being a failure and a coward. Cordle is at his office door as Madame emerges at the top of the stairs still shouting, "Go ahead run, run, run!" In the street Manek runs off and as he does so he kicks over several pails at the construction site. The workers shout after Manek. Fade to black. [*Madame is increasingly aware that she has lost some of her influence over Manek. In an attempt to entrench herself Madame seems consumed by her own intentions and desires and so has limited sensitivity with respect to Manek's subjective state. Manek is concerned for his mother and her status. Blum offers a way for Manek to begin to move toward his mother's dreams for him by offering Manek a means to make money. When he turns to Madame for support he must face Madame's rhetoric of negativity. It is at this point the educative relationship between Madame and Manek takes an interesting turn. When Madame says, "It plays" she does so to confirm her belief that Manek needs her in order to guide his gift. However, Manek refutes Madame's claims of a disembodied ownership and says "I play." Madame's way of understanding music and her relationship to her students is confronted by Manek's passion for what he believes is right. The ironic* *twist here flows from Madame accusing Manek of running away, of being a coward. Manek seeks to bring his potential to fruition, to face the music. Madame is the one who ran from her music and secluded herself.. She is the one who surrounded herself with the Sousatzka System. Manek, is the very condition of the possibility for Madame to use her method, and yet she cannot bring herself to let Manek go on and perform. Perhaps ultimately in a pedagogic way Manek's resistance to Madame's intentions might begin to bring Madame to face the poverty of her own life and the reality of her very limited relations with others.*]

Scene 32. Madame comes down the street with grocery bag in hand. She stops to watch the movers load furniture into a van. Edward also comes down the street. He pauses to look at the "For Sale" signs and notices of "Investment Properties" which have gone up all over the street. Edward approaches the back of Lady Emily's house. But Lady Emily's downstairs suite is vacant. He sees Madame approaching and says, "So they got her out finally did they?"

Madame nods. When Edward asks if Madame is going to be staying on, Madame replies quickly, "Of course I am staying. My students will just have to learn to play louder. They will become immune to all the people having coughing fits in the auditorium. Come for tea?"

"Well I wouldn't mind one of your mother's biscuits," says Edward as Madame motions for him to come in.

In Madame's apartment she fixes tea for Edward and he asks Madame for a favor. Edward wants Madame to take on a new student. Madame insists she cannot. Edward insists that she will like him and that he is very talented.

But Madame insists, "Too much now that Manek is about to make his breakthrough. And you know how bad it is to go from there to there."

Edward inquires about Manek's age. Madame tells Edward Manek is the age he was when he left her.

To that Edward replies, "I never left you. You know that. Even now as I play in a concert you are somehow with me. When things get tough, or the piano behaves like a monster, and the audience is another monster, I hear you yelling at me to get on with it. And I listen. And I know. I know that all those hours with you have formed a little core of strength in me. And it gets me through it."

Madame's eyes are watery. "You know what they say about me. They say that I made terrible scenes when you left me for Leo. That I went mad like a jealous mistress. That I was in love with you. A 15 year old boy." After a pause she continues, "Of course I was in love with you. Isn't every mother in love with the son she creates? So why shouldn't I love in the same way." Madame turns to face the window as she cries. Edward comes to comfort her, but she pushes free. Then suddenly she reaches out and grabs Edward and cries on his shoulder as he pats her back. [*Madame begins to face the questions and doubts regarding her personal and professional intentions for her gifted students. Edward and Manek bring into the present Madame's troubled past relations with her mother. As such, Madame is beginning to face the questions of what it means to have an educative relation with a student as opposed to some other kind of relationship--parental, friendship, love, mentoring, and so on.*]

Scene 33. Lady Emily is now living in the country. It is in a red brick town-house complex beside a canal. While taking out the trash she slips on the stairs and hurts her hip. Later while she is in the hospital Cordle comes to visit. Lady tells Cordle she needs a really good osteopath. Also she cannot really figure out why the only good one she knows remains in London. Cordle after a pause also cannot think of any reasons. Lady Emily says, "One person living in London, and another in a lovely place by the river with two bedrooms doesn't make sense does it?" Then the nurse enters to take Lady Emily's tray.

Scene 34. Manek returns home. He finds Sunil, Sushila's male friend, making tea for Sushila. Sunil tells Manek Sushila is most upset. She has lost her job. Quickly Manek takes over Sunil's tea making and goes into see his mother. Sushila tells Manek she did not meet the standards of the store.

Manek lightheartedly says, "What do they know about standards? I like them hair and all." But Sushila is concerned about what they will do. Manek tells her he will look after things. Sunil sits and drinks his tea alone.

Scene 35. Manek sits with Blum at a restaurant. Blum tells Manek that the upcoming festival he is coordinating is a great opportunity for him. Manek can begin there and go on to play in competitions. He has to build up his repertoire.

"I don't want to jump in if I am not ready."

"You are ready. I mean my God I wouldn't normally use a boy your age," says Blum as he helps Manek with his food. "I mean when I heard you play I was interested. You are very advanced. You knew that?"

"That's not what Madame says."

"This is difficult for you to understand. She is a good teacher, a great teacher, but she suffers from mixed motives. It is an old story. She is limited in her experience and doesn't seem to know the world. I can take you to places. Places where they would queue up all night to hear someone as good as you. Come on. This is an opportunity to make a lot of money doing what you enjoy most. What do you think then? About the festival?"

Manek is still confused. They continue to eat. And after lunch Blum takes Manek to the concert hall. On the way Manek inquires about Blum's relationship to Jenny.

"Funny you should ask. You see Jenny and I have a very special relationship. Now I have a little surprise for you. This should sort out what you think," says Blum

Inside the hall technicians are doing sound checks. As Blum and Manek approach the stage Blum tells Manek to go on up to the piano. Blum also tells the stage hands to take a break. Manek approaches the white piano on the stage. He sits and after a moment begins to play wonderfully. Blum is joined by Pick and both sit and listen. As Manek concludes his playing he looks out into the vast number of seats. [*The last few scenes have set up the* *necessity for Manek to play a concert. It is interesting how Blum characterizes Madame as someone with limited life experiences. Yet she was able to spot Blum's intentions very quickly.*]

Scene 36. Cordle's equipment is being loaded on a truck. Madame looks down on the scene from above. Manek is at the piano. He asks Madame what she will do when the house is sold. Madame corrects Manek that he is to be thinking about music and not the house selling. Manek takes out a Schumann piece. Madame notices inquiring if he is tired of the Beethoven. Then suddenly she asks, "Are you tired of me? Look at me. Why so shy? Oh, my goodness. Come here. Come here," says Madame. She sits by Manek on the piano stool. Madame reaches out and touches Manek's chin and says, "You know that when you hate me--no I know sometimes you do--that I do it all for you."

Manek gets off the piano bench. He walks about for a moment then returns to the piano. Madame taking notice of Manek's behavior says, "He hasn't been calling you? That agent?" Manek plays the piano as Madame says again," People haven't been trying to get at you have they?"

"What people Madame Sousatzka?"

"It is impossible to have a serious conversation with you," says Madame as Manek suddenly switches tempo and plays a boogie-woogie piece to which Madame begins to dance.

Scene 37. Lady Emily's housing complex is in the country. Madame is visiting. She and Lady Emily look out from the balcony at Manek and Cordle who are far below walking beside the canal. Lady Emily and Madame talk about Manek. Madame tells Lady Emily just how quickly Manek is developing. His talent is immense. Then Madame says, "Of course, I give him hell you know. I don't make it easy for him I can tell you."

"Young people are so very sensitive. One has to be a little circumspect don't you find?"

Madame responds, "An artist has no right to be sensitive. They have to be tough. You know what I think. I think he is going to be better than anyone I ever had. Yes."

Down at river's edge Cordle says, "You are very far from here. You are thinking of something entirely different?"

"I am going to play for Ronnie Blum's festival."

"Why that's wonderful, but I take it you haven't told her yet. Well you'll have to tell her."

"She'll go out of her mind. She'll tear me to bits," says Manek.

Cordle replies, "Possibly. She has a very excessive nature." They walk on and Cordle tells Manek that Madame will just have to get used to it. There are many things in life one must get used to or do without. Then Cordle tells Manek he misses his sessions with Manek and thinks of him often. [*Again Madame's contradictory nature appears. Madame tells Lady Emily what she intends for Manek and how it will make him tough and resourceful. She intends to make Manek a true professional and that can only happen through repeated testing. Yet she also demands that Manek be connected to her in a most dependent way. In contrast, Lady Emily offers Madame some advice. Lady Emily cautions Madame that some students today have a different understanding of life. A student's sense of subjectivity differs from that of adults, and that difference must be taken into account. Madame does not seem to take Lady Emily's advice seriously. At the same time, Cordle offers some advice to Manek. Cordle indicates to Manek that there are many things in life that one must do without in order to move on. Still life must remain a hopeful journey, even if it must face the pending ever-present crisis. Cordle also demonstrates for Manek a certain strength and resoluteness to move on. Cordle also suggests that life is a tension between what is present and what is absent.*]

Scene 38. Madame's car speeds along the road. She is tapping on the dashboard as is Manek. They take turns pounding out rhythms and guessing the origins. As Madame pounds out a beat Manek suddenly blurts out, "Ronnie Blum has asked me to play at the festival. I am going to do it."

Madame's face changes colour. Her car swerves into a gas station. Madame honks the car horn several times. The attendant sits unmoved. Manek tells her it is a self-serve station. Madame gets out and approaches the pump but cannot get the nozzle out of the pumper. Manek steps in and tells her he will put gasoline in the car. As Manek puts the fuel into the car Madame finally says to him, "If it is only the money why don't you play in a cocktail bar? It is your mother. All she ever thinks about is money."

"Because she never has any."

"I have heard her go on and on about what she has done. All her sacrifices she made."

"No, she doesn't," replies Manek.

Madame stamps her foot and cries, "Don't lie to me. I heard it myself. It was she who went to Ronnie Blum."

"She had nothing to do with it. It was me."

"I don't believe you. You wouldn't sell yourself to that man."

Later Madame's car pulls into Manek's crescent. Manek thanks Madame for driving him home. As the windshield wipers flop back and forth he tells her he will see her tomorrow. But Madame looks out at Manek from behind the wheel and says, "If this is really how it is. If this is what you want to do, then I cannot teach you anymore."

Manek implores her to let him continue to be her student.

"Sorry but I cannot. It would be completely against my principles," says Madame as Manek steps back from the car and Madame drives off into the night. [*Manek defends his mother against Madame's charges. Manek claims that he made the decision himself regarding his choice to perform. In this admitting Manek also shows Madame how a person accepts responsibility for his or her choices. In turn, Madame claims it is her principles to the vocation of teaching music that makes it impossible for her to teach Manek* *further. He has gone against her wishes and she cannot permit that. It seems rather ironic that Madame must now turn from her student when he is on the verge of needing his teacher the most. What could be behind Madame's motives in not wanting to be behind her student when he really needs her with him?*]

Scene 39. Two pianos are placed side by side in Leo's studio. Leo stands beside a student who is playing. Several other students sit about in a semi-circle listening. Leo offers encouragement to the student. Manek is among the group of students listening. Later Manek talks to Leo who says, "I believe you have good potential, but I don't think it would be right for me to take you until after your concert is over. What do you intend to play?"

Manek replies that he will be playing a Schumann concerto. Leo tells Manek that after his concert his studio will be open to him. He offers his left hand to Manek.

Scene 40. Sushila is working around the house as Manek plays the piano. Manek looks closely at the Schumann music. He plays the piece over and over. During his practice Sushila cleans and picks up clothes. She discovers Manek's Indian shirt, the one she gave him, crumpled in the corner. Manek plays on feverishly. Later he pauses to paste a copy of the poster advertising the festival into a letter to Madame asking her to attend the concert. [*The student still calls out to his teacher.*]

Scene 41. Madame walks about her studio late at night. She tears up Manek's festival program, but places half on her desk.

Scene 42. A clown blowing a horn brushes by and another clown walks by on long stilts as cars pass entering, "Heaton Park/Festival of the Arts." A quartet sits playing saxophones. In another area people wander about talking and laughing. Among the growing crowd is Ronnie Blum. He sits with a group of formally dressed guests. Jenny appears and sees Blum at the table. She goes over and walks up behind Blum who is telling a story. Jenny reaches over him and picks up a carrot and dips it. The people at the table are shocked. Blum excuses himself and grabs Jenny. While taking Jenny from the area Blum asks if she knows how important these people are. Jenny makes a comment about Blum's lack of introduction, and Blum replies he has to tread very carefully. Jenny rejects all of Blum's explanations and walks from him.

There is an announcement that the concert is about to begin. People file into the hall.

Manek flexes his fingers. He walks to a full length mirror where he straightens his tie. As the conductor and orchestra get ready people continue to stream in and find their seats. Back with Manek Jenny enters to wish him good luck and to tell him he will be great. She gives him a kiss on the cheek and leaves.

Elsewhere Sushila is stacking plates and her helpers are quickly making ready the after concert food. Sunil moves about the tables sampling the food. He is scolded by Sushila. In the concert hall Blum sits and turns to locate Jenny. He motions to her but she ignores his gesture. The orchestra begins to warm up. Manek sits back stage anxiously waiting. He shadow-plays his score by tapping his fingers against his thighs. The orchestra takes a bow. As the orchestra sets itself again and the BBC announcer introduces Manek to the radio audience by saying, "He's only 15 years old. Born in England he is a student at Bridge Comprehensive School in London. He is studying the piano with Irena Sousatzka."

Manek comes to the piano as the conductor prepares the orchestra. Sushila and Sunil are among those clapping. At the back doorway appears Madame. The conductor motions to Manek who nods back. The orchestra begins. An attendant asks Madame if she wishes to be seated. Madame motions no and begins to walk out. Manek plays on. Madame has entered an adjacent room, but the music may be heard clearly. Manek continues to play as Madame strolls. She pauses before a painting of a nude woman. In the background there is a sculpture of entangled lovers. Madame stops in the room at a piano. As she looks at it longingly in the background on the couch two young lovers are embracing.

Lady Emily and Cordle sit by the radio. Back in the hall Manek plays on and his mother beams with pride. Madame again moves into the back of the center hall. An attendant seats her. The perspiration flows off Manek's brow. Madame looks on intensely as does Jenny and Blum. Suddenly Manek's face is terror stricken. He has skipped ahead in the score. The conductor tells the orchestra to "let him play" and tells Manek that they are at letter "K" in the score. Madame instantly knows what has happened and she puts her hands to her face. Leo blinks and puts his hand to the bridge of his nose. But the music continues. Blum looks about seemingly unaware of Manek's problem. Sushila and Sunil are as proud as ever. Jenny is beaming. Madame has some tears, but Manek plays on as if re-possessed having found his bearings somewhat.

Madame closes her eyes and sees herself in her blue dress at the piano. She relives her failure to overcome her own performance block. She slams down the piano cover and dashes off into her mother's arms. Back in the concert hall Manek reaches the end. With a sudden fury he concludes only to dash off the stage. The conductor breathes a sigh of relief and the audience applauds wildly. The ovation brings Madame back to the present. She claps politely. Backstage the conductor grabs Manek and tells him to get back on the stage. He says to Manek, "Hardly anyone would have heard the mistake."

Manek and conductor re-enter the stage area. "Bravos" ring out from the audience. Madame notices the audience's reaction and having stopped clapping herself begins again. [*This powerful scene that fluctuates between experiences such as success and failure, joy and pain, and projection and reflection also features soft images of sensuality. Perhaps this is an attempt to suggest that Madame has given up a great deal of herself in her desire to be a great teacher like her mother. Is it possible that in Madame's attempt to make music her life in a full and embodied way may have ironically taken her away from life relations as opposed to being part of them? Is it possible that Madame's latent "love interest" in Edward and Manek simply fills a void left by the poverty of her relationship with her mother? Still the feature of the scene is Manek's performance. In the face of terror and doubt he presses* *on. The contrast of Manek's performance with Madame's performance is obvious. Manek plays on. He has the courage to continue, and only a select few audience members realize the error Manek has made. Madame seems surprised at how few people have noticed as Manek's performance is enthusiastically applauded. Has Madame's entire life after her failed performance been based upon the assumption that a performance must be totally perfect or it is a total failure? Is there no possibility to learn something about self, others, and life in what goes on between failure and success.*]

Scene 43. The after performance reception is in full swing. As Madame passes by each little gathering she hears the audience members praise and critique Manek's playing. None mention the missing bars. Madame enters a side room to the concert hall and there is Manek sitting alone. He looks up at her and says, "I cut 8 bars."

"It doesn't matter," says Madame as she kneels beside Manek. "What do they know? Tonight was a bad dream and now we go on--you and I go on. Tomorrow evening you come to my studio. We make a celebration just the two of us." She hugs him. "Then we begin again. We will work. I will kill you yet. My poor darling."

Outside the hall the after festival performances continue as Manek strolls the grounds. He is alone and deep in thought. [*Despite everything that has happened Madame still seems reluctant to learn her life lessons. She suggests she and Manek should celebrate what she considers Manek's failure, because it will bring him back to her. But there is a sense Manek is now beyond the kind of relationship Madame can offer at this point. Perhaps Manek is now also beyond Madame herself.*]

Scene 44. Madame lights a candle. She has set two places for supper. She fusses over the arrangement of the place settings and the candles. Manek is on the stairs. He has a note in his hands. Madame sheds her black coat and, reversing it, puts it back on as a yellow jacket. She poses in the mirror.

Manek is outside Madame's door, but he continues on up the stairs to Jenny's. He enters to see Jenny is packing. "Where is all your stuff?" asks Manek. In response Jenny tells Manek she got rid of most of it. Then Manek asks Jenny if he may stay the night. He kisses her. Jenny tells him she does not even have a bed. Manek kisses her again and Jenny returns his kiss.

Madame holds a picture frame close to her. She places it back on the shelf. It is a picture of Edward. Madame looks in the mirror. She draws in the light dust on the mirror a stylistic "S". Outside her building a wrecking ball smacks another house. Later Madame is asleep in her chair. She stirs and looks at her watch. She goes to the curtains and pulls them apart revealing the bright sunshine. The sounds of destruction and construction greet her. Madame takes a cookie from the jar. The floor outside her studio creaks as a note is being slipped under the door. Madame sees the note and she picks it up. She opens the door and Manek is on the stairs. Madame offers him a cookie suggesting that he missed supper. Manek thanks her for the cookie. She looks at the note.

"I came to say good-bye to you and Jenny. To all of you. And to thank you for everything Madame S." Manek then leaves as Madame stands there. Madame reads: "Dear Madame Sousatzka: Please don't be angry, but I have decided to study with Leo. I shall never forget what you have done. And I will always be grateful. I hope you will understand and forgive me. Manek. P.S. I hope it plays as well for him as it did for you."

In the street below Edward approaches with a woman and a small boy. Madame notices Edward's approach from her studio window. Edward says, "There is no need to be nervous. Don't worry. When I first came to her that was over ten years ago, I was more nervous than you are now I am sure."

Madame, with cookie in hand, beckons Edward up. Piano music begins in the background. And from the backdrop of all the construction surrounding Madame's studio, and as guided by the background music, the film's credits begin to roll until the screen is black. [***In this scene Manek confirms his musical and sexual maturity. Emerging from the images of destruction and construction, a new morning emerges for both Manek and Madame. Manek speaks openly about the influence Madame has had on him, and like***

Edward, confirms that she will always be with him as will the influential members of that household. He speaks of his relationship with others as a tribute to Madame's intentions for him. Manek's note to Madame also suggests that he hopes another teacher may be able to bring the gift out of him as she has brought "it" out of him. Beyond the system and beyond the desire for perfection and dominance both Edward and Manek found a place in which they could relationally come to understand themselves with and against Madame and their understanding of music. Perhaps it was Madame's seemingly unforgiving nature that shows her students another way of being because she had insisted on doing everything one way. As Madame faces her new student it is difficult to believe she is the same person who took on Edward and then Manek. Through the questioning and doubting Manek and Edward brought forward into Madame's personal-professional life, surely she is on the verge of responsively and responsibly examining her pedagogical intentions, influence, and relations with her students. Pedagogical antinomies challenge a teacher in his or her daily duties and encounters with students, and they are also a powerful source of that which demands a reflective response.]

Reviewing the reading:

Tensions and contradictions belong to the pedagogical experience

Madame's pedagogical qualities are significant. Her sense of vocation is as overwhelming as is her sense of responsibility to her discipline and for her students. She stands up, often and dramatically, for her understanding of the world. She is vital, energetic, and competent in her mastery of her chosen art form. Madame is acknowledged as an outstanding music teacher by her peers and, subsequently, she is honored by parents who bring very musically talented children to her for instruction. For the most part Madame's students are ready and willing to be led by her.

However, the filmic narrative of *Madame Sousatzka*, like that of *Stand and Deliver* and *Dead Poets Society*, not only features depictions of the often contradictory nature of an educative relation, but much like Escalante and Keating, Madame herself embodies mixed motives with respect to her intentions for her students. What is interesting in the tensions embodied in Madame's teaching qualities and educative approach is that it is Madame's most significant teaching qualities that are also those that increase the tensions between Madame and her students. On several occasions, Madame is demanding to the point of being cruel, controlling to the point of being manipulative, and singularly self-oriented to the point of being tactless in her demands for compliance by her students with respect to what Madame believes to be each child's ability, attitude, and potential. As such, Madame's students often find themselves experientially fluctuating between poles such as trust and resentment, clarity and confusion, confidence and doubt, and perseverance and defeat.

The filmic narrative of *Madame Sousatzka* provides an opportunity to explore Madame's educative relationship with her students. Significantly Madame's intentions for her present students seems to be influenced by the tensions of a dominant unresolved personal-professional relationship in Madame's past. Madame's now deceased, but not departed, mother was also her piano teacher. We see, albeit through Madame's eyes, just how domineering and perfection-orientated task-master Madame's only parent was. Madame's mother intended her daughter to become an outstanding concert pianist. From a series of flashbacks that take Madame back into her past, it becomes evident that Madame's sense of autonomy, choice, and latitude were limited under her mother-teacher's strong hand. Indeed, Madame's early growth as a piano student was measured by order, discipline, and regulation. The assumption was that with intensive training the young Madame would be on her way to a promising career. But where there should have been success and glory, the young Madame Sousatzka failed. Now in the present, and years later, Madame is haunted by her own dramatic, seemingly unrecoverable, failure as a performer. On occasion influenced by this sense of failure, which is translated by Madame, via a coping mechanism, into a question of readiness she comes to direct her educational relationships with her students on the grounds that readiness means everything.

Increasingly through the filmic narrative Madame seems drawn to relive her past in the present. This movement flows from a sense of doubting herself, and it is initiated by Madame's interactions with Edward and Manek. As Edward and Manek break from Madame emotionally, physically, and musically, and true to their passionately claim that they could not have accomplished what they did without their relationship with Madame, they have still in the process of being with and breaking from dramatically, and pedagogically, influenced Madame to begin to take responsibility for her life past and present.

As the film ends, it is Madame herself who begins anew. Changes are swirling about her. Her house mates have been dislocated and relocated. The neighbourhood, previously a destruction zone, is now a construction zone. Professionally, Madame is offered a new student. All of these changes indicate the possibility for a new creative space where Madame might be able to face her past and future as they meet in the present. Is it possible that the teacher who makes others is, through the influence of others, now on the verge of remaking herself?

Although the filmic narrative offers strong possibilities to explore questions of pedagogical subjectivity, and pedagogical responsibility, it is the question of intentionality that seems to dominant the film. Indeed, the film is riddled with the tension of mixed motives. The film shows that the antinomous nature of life challenges teacher and student, parent and child, and also requires of each a response. The film, *Madame Sousatzka*, shows that in some instances teachers and parents have pedagogic intentions for their students and children, and yet at other times the teacher's and parent's intentions may not be that pedagogically sensitive. As such, the film's narrative provides enough time and space to wonder: is it possible that mixed motives on the part of a teachers or a parent, which could be seen as non-pedagogical intentions, can eventually be of some pedagogical benefit to the child, and the student, if there is a pedagogically sensitive adult to offered instructive guidance?

READING TWO: *Madame Sousatzka* as a multi-interpreted text

I teach not only how to play the piano, but how to live. (Madame Sousatzka.)

This reading offers a summary of commentaries that focus on the film *Madame Sousatzka*. The source of these commentaries are the numerous critical reviews of the film. Although the vast number of the reviews of *Madame Sousatzka* focus on cinematographic criticism, or the film's commercial success or failure, many also offer comments, directly and indirectly, about the educative relation featured in the film. This second reading, then, is an attempt to flesh out some themes that may further openings to explore the meaning and significance of the pedagogical relation.

Many of the reviewers of *Madame Sousatzka* are drawn to express opinions regarding the cinematographic performance of Shirley MacLaine as the Madame. However, there is a tension among the reviewers that range between critics' responses that are of delight and conversely of rancor regarding MacLaine's portrayal of an often despotic piano teacher locked into a special relationship with her students. Maslin (1988) indicates the film in many ways is shallow, but it is also effective in how it tells its story.

> *Madame Sousatzka* is as much of an antique as the woman herself and her sentimental celebration of the "great pianist and pedagogue" as one of Madame's admirers describes her. It's as affectionate, big-hearted and creaky as any film that ever graced Radio City Music Hall, with leisureliness and dime-store philosophizing to match. And if its insights into Madame's character don't go much deeper than the layer of makeup that transforms Miss MacLaine into a painted harridan, they don't really have to. Like its heroine, *Madame Sousatzka* finds a form of defiance in what otherwise might merely seem dated. (Maslin, 1988, p. 366)

Kael (1988), on the other hand, offers a review of the film that has little difficulty describing MacLaine's depiction of Sousatzka.

> MacLaine's Sousatzka has no Old World charm and no New World charm, either. And, without a big, maddening personality to irradiate it, the movie is like a prestige bestseller from an earlier era. As a viewing experience, it's laborious--not

> bad but not enjoyably bad, either. It should be projected on the wall while you have a polite lunch at the Russian Tea Room--the wall behind you. (Kael, 1988, pp. 85-86)

Champlin (1988) also feels, as do many reviewers, that MacLaine's Sousatzka is simply a too contrived characterization of a piano teacher. Champlin (1988) believes MacLaine's border-line schizophrenic depiction of Madame flows from, as other reviewers also suspect, MacLaine's interest in metaphysical "channelling" and its "New Age" ramifications.

> "Metaphysical investigations," MacLaine says, "aren't ends in themselves but means to ends. I had to get through the feeling that spiritual technology was everything in itself to realizing that it was a tool for everyday living. It could apply to whatever I do--dance, write, act or just get through a Hollywood meeting. In a way, it's remarkably like acting. When you commit to a character, you're making a leap of faith, believing she's real. You have to learn how to commit to leaps of faith in other things." (Champlin, 1988, p. 1, 8)

Some interviews with MacLaine negotiated during and after the filming of *Madame Sousatzka* indicate that she had "channelled" her part by letting a piano teacher's spirit be present in her depiction of Sousatzka. Still the reviews that focus on MacLaine's depiction of Madame Sousatzka, and that look for a cause for her way of portraying the character, ironically point to something interesting. The reviewers try to solve the problem of Madame Sousatzka's contradictory nature by looking for a logical, rational reason. Ironically, these same reviewers settle on the logic of a metaphysical "channelling" to indicate Madame's attitude and behavioral swings have a cause-effect relationship.

Still other reviewers have selected a specific aspect of the film that has drawn their attention. For example, Maslin (1988) is interested in the question of a teacher's conscious, and unconscious, relationship to the world as it exists around him or her. Maslin (1988) is especially drawn to Madame's insistence that, "I teach not only how to play the piano, but how to live." But Maslin (1988) wonders about just how conscious Madame is of the world around her.

> Madame Irena Sousatzka is a magnificent relic, the kind of creature who can be found only in the memories of her most devoted students, or else on the movie screen. A woman like this would be at a disadvantage in the real world, but Madame barely acknowledges the real world at all. She lives solely for music,

> surrounded by photographs of great pianists and educating a hand-picked group of prodigies, to whom she gives homemade cookies and imparts her own brand of wisdom. (Maslin, 1988, p. 366)

Indeed, Ronnie Blum, as the film's sinister element, makes the same comment about Madame's disconnectedness from reality. Blum suggests, rather strongly, to Manek that a break with Madame's irrational and unrealistic vision of the world is in order if he is to become a concert pianist. Certainly, Madame lives a rather marginalized existence in a physical, emotional, and professional sense. Her dress, style, and home are shrines to the past. She is surrounded with others who also have marginalized existences. Lady Emily is a friendly, yet exceeding lonely widow. Cordle is a public professional as a chiropractor, and a closet homosexual. Jenny is obsessed with her musical career, but remains rather talentless. In a sense each of these persons' lives is as schizophrenically marginalized as is Madame's. Maslin (1988) wonders how it is possible not to question Madame's thoughts and practices when her behavior is riddled with mixed motives.

Other reviewers, in degrees of interest, are intrigued by the theme of suggested latent sexuality in *Madame Sousatzka*. These reviewers also see the possibility of latent sexual tensions in the film as another example of the depictions of mixed motives in most of the characters in the film. The consummation of young Manek's adult sexuality with the older Jenny is not really questioned by the predominantly male reviewers. But these same reviewers wonder about what they see as the cinematographic suggestions of a latent sexual intentionality in the relationships between Manek and Cordle (homosexual overtones), Manek and his mother (incestuous overtones), as well as Manek and Sousatzka (predatory overtones). Indeed, all the older woman in the film appear desperately attracted to Manek. The question these reviewers seem to want to raise, and Madame raises the question herself when she opens up to Edward, is: even if a teacher professes that he or she has the best interests of his or her students at heart, is there a possibility that the teacher may also be susceptible to and committed to acting on intentions that are influenced by mixed motives?

> Typically, Madame S. comes on like a curmudgeon, but the well-behaved Manek is smart enough to appreciate that she's a truly gifted teacher who has his best

> interests at heart. But has she really? For in time she comes to love him as she did his immediate predecessor. Where the film rings truest is in its quality of ambiguity in regard to human nature: we're never able to determine the degree to which this repressed woman's feelings are maternal or sexual in regard to her pupil(s), and we're also never quite sure where her sensible insistence that her talented pupil not concertize until he's ready ends and where her possessiveness and fears take over. (Montesano, 1988, p. 21)

> And indeed, Madame ushers the boy into manhood, tutoring him in table manners, style of dress, and, of course, musical sensibility. ... While the movie skillfully interweaves its meditation on the nature of the artist with the tale of a young man's coming-of-age, Schlesinger's primary emphasis is neither on Manek nor his gifts but on the women who inform the boy's life--that is, Manek's single mother, Sushila, and to a greater extent, the lonely Madame S. ... Indeed, each woman puts the young prodigy at the center of her very existence. Yet it's not simply a matter of mothering. ... These women's feelings clearly betray a sexual component as well. In one scene an embarrassed Manek ... rubs his mother's back; "Oh, Babu, oh Babu," she sighs with pleasure as he cringes. In another, Madame S. smolders with jealousy over Manek's youthful attention to a pretty young woman (Twiggy). That mother and teacher become adversaries vying like wife and mistress, should come as no surprise.
>
> Much of this is worked out with delicacy. Yet when Edward, a former pupil, visits Madame, Schlesinger eventually goes too far. "They say that I was in love with you, a sixteen-year-old boy!" she confesses with uncharacteristic insight. "Why shouldn't I be in love with you? Isn't every mother in love with her son?" And every mentor with the genius she helps shape? (Close, 1988, p. 74)

The comments by Montesano (1988) and Close (1988) raise the question of the confusion between what might be seen as as a sensual, sexual, or lustful relationship between an adult and a child, a teacher and a student, or what might be seen as a loving relationship between a mother and her child, and as a caring relationship between a teacher and her students.

Corliss (1988) offers a vision of another theme in the film. He questions the film's unquestioning depiction of an implicit form of colonialism and nationalism. Corliss (1988) suggests that American cinema, like American politics and American commerce, are us-first industries. Very rarely does the Western consciousness, which drives these respective industries, look outside its own swagger, aggression, and complacency. Seldom does the film industry, specifically as a representation of Western values, take notice of other cultures in any way other than as possible aggressors, undesirable primitives, or subservient trading partners. So when the film industry does turn to focus on alternative cultures, it often sees ethnic solidarity not in frame of alternative world stories, but as something essentially threatening, primitive, or exploitable. Difference in this sense is understood as an irritant. Corliss (1988) suggests, then, that in the margins of the film, *Madame Sousatzka*, there is a subtle struggle evident between East-West philosophies and practices. Sushila gives Manek a charm to ward off Sousatzka's evil eye. Sousatzka ridicules any suggestion that the stars control her fate. Sushila buys Manek a traditional Indian shirt, and Sousatzka buys Manek a traditional Western suit. Madame insists Manek read in the Western literary traditions to enhance his interpretation of classical music, and Sushila insists Manek help her with her ethnic food business. And yet it is Manek's youthful difference, his musical gift, and indeed his Eastern heritage and style, that attracts not only Jenny, Lady Emily, and Cordle, but also Madame and Blum. For Blum especially Manek presents a unique selling opportunity.

> *Madame Sousatzka* ... is the latest to examine the most recent cinematic obsession: exploration of the British/Pakistani/Indian relationship. ... In *Madame Sousatzka*, the nationalism expressed in the film is filtered through the universality of music. Manek, a fifteen-year-old Indian boy, is a born musical genius, a keyboard player extraordinare. He lives in an Indian-run boarding house in England with his mother, who provides local stores with authentic Indian delicacies to pay for her son's education and the rent. ... Hearing that Sousatzka is the best piano teacher around Manek's mother goes to her, hoping she will take on her son as a student so that he may one day, as she puts it, "play concerts." ... Manek's exposure to this world intrigues him. His mother, meanwhile, fears he's slowly breaking away from his heritage and from her. Sousatzka professes that music does not come from the fingers but from the whole person. The way one dresses and sits--the books one reads, the people one knows--all affect his playing. (Montesano, 1988, p. 22)

Madame's intention, via her unifying approach to teaching music, and her subsequent influence over Manek, is guided by her desire to create a whole musician. The head, body, and soul must be in unison with the gift the artist possesses and is possessed by. In order to accomplish this unification, Madame has a system in place to control and yet free Manek from all the other non-musical senses of self he may have. Therefore, Manek's athleticism must only be used for his piano playing; there will be no roller skating. His guided reading must be rooted in the Western Classics; even though Lady Emily's spiritual advisor is a countryman of Manek's. His manners must be those of a sophisticated person; yet he and his mother often joyously eat with their fingers. Any other selfs, be they political, social, ethnic, cultural, linguistic, athletic, racial, religious, and so on, are seen as somewhat problematic in Madame's approach to teaching, because they might take Manek away from the expression of his gift. Montesano (1988) concludes that Madame may be oblivious to the violence inherent in her desire for her students to be successful. For all the right reasons she may not be doing what is right for Manek by devaluing his heritage the way she does. What is eradicated, pushed aside, and oppressed in Madame's desire to pursue what she assumes is the proper correction of Manek's deficiencies and flaws?

Finally, the film *Madame Sousatzka* also draws the interest of music teachers, music historians, as well as film reviewers who specialize in musical films.

> Films about Musicians? Plenty, ever since Harry Baur played Beethoven in the 1930's. Through films have paraded Chopin, Liszt, Schumann, Clara Schumann, Brahms, Berlioz, Tchalkovsky, Delius, Wagner, Mahler, you name it. Most of those films have one thing in common. They were awful. ... Films about piano teachers? Now the list becomes restrictive. There was a piano teacher in *The Seventh Veil*, starring James Mason and Ann Todd. In *Intermezzo* Lesie Howard was Ingrid Bergman's violin teacher. Many years later, Miss Bergman, in the role of a famous pianist, taught her daughter in *Autumn Sonata*. A teacher played a part in the more recent *The Competition*. A charming, sensitive British film some 25 years ago featured a piano prodigy and his teacher. There are more that refuse to ring a bell here.
>
> Now comes *Madame Sousatzka*. The film's critics will be discussing *Madame Sousatzka* in cinematic terms. Speaking musically, though, this is an honest attempt to bring into perspective the travails of a prodigy, his growing up, his relationship with his teacher and, as he develops, with the music industry. (Schnoberg, 1988, p. 23, 30)

In an attempt to speak pedagogically about the film, Schnoberg (1988) highlights several issues. First, there is the question of both the teacher's and student's relationship to his or her discipline. Second, there is the question of the nature of the educative relationship between the teacher, student, and discipline. Third, the boundaries of the educational relationship between teacher and student must take into consideration the ever present self and other defining powers of the prevailing societal conditions.

Schnoberg (1988) also indicates that a piano teacher goes about his or her teaching in ways not unlike other discipline-bound teachers. Some music teachers take on a dramatic-performative role and often become tyrants who advocate control over process.

Other teachers prefer a softer approach and they move to specialize in providing inspirational encouragement. Some music teachers are pedantic; some are pedagogically creative. Some insist on honoring the basics; some abhor the mechanics. Some keep a distance from their students; some enter into every aspect of their students' lives.

> When Madame Sousatzka says that, "I just don't teach piano. I teach how to live," she is following good Russian tradition. In the great piano classes of Nicolai Zverev in Moscow in the 1880's he had at one time in the same class Josef Lhevinne, Sergei Rachmaninoff and Alexander Scriabin--the boys lived in his house. They got up at daylight. They had to practice incessantly. They were taken to the museums and the theater. They had to read Russian classics. They moved in the best society, and Zverev took careful note of their dress and manners. (Schnoberg,1988, p. 23, 30)

Schnoberg (1988) suggests that the cinematographic potential of Sousatzka, as a portrayal of a music teacher, falls within legitimate boundaries with respect to how actual music teachers live with their discipline and students. Pushing the comparison, Schnoberg (1988) goes on to look for an exact link between the cinematographically created Sousatzka and possible "real-life" Sousatzkas.

> Whether or not the producers of *Madame Sousatzka* realize it, the piano teacher in the film is modeled after Isabella Vengerova (1877-1956). She was the empress of the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia, and through her hands passed such figures as Samuel Barber, Lukas Foss, Leonard Bernstein and Gary Graffman. She was demanding and despotic. Things had to be done exactly her way. When she went into a tantrum, she could make her pupils feel like crawling caterpillars, and she lived by a set of vanished ideals in which music and only music was the focus of her and her pupil's lives. (Schnoberg, 1988, p. 30)

Schnoberg (1988) also offers a counter image that he finds embodied in the mixed motive teaching of the cinematographically bound Sousatzka.

> Quite different was the teaching of Rosina Lhevinne at the Juilliard. ... She was gentler, more relaxed, completely inspirational. ... Rosina centered in on the expressive elements of the music: "Dollink. No, no, no. You must make like a cello." She was intensely interested in all aspects of her pupils' lives, tried to arrange marriages, advised the girls on their dress. Those wise old eyes of hers had seen everything, heard everything. One thing she gave nearly all of her pupils--a rich, gorgeous sound.
>
> Thus Madame Sousatzka has some precedent in her professional and emotional attempt to take over every aspect of her gifted pupil's life. And she works the way a dedicated teacher works. She has a "system," and anatomical charts are spread all over the studio. She is an advocate of relaxed muscles, and she spends a lot of time trying to correct the physical tensions in the boy's playing.

> Some things are skimmed over. Her teaching never discusses the architecture of the music. She lets the boy get away with some questionable interpretative details; his playing lacks dynamic thrust. But this film is not a documentary, and several stories are going on at once: the way the hungry developers take over old houses; the struggle between the teacher and the boy's mother; his crush on a woman (Twiggy) a few years his senior; the way music management rushes to seize and exploit a talent before it is ready. (Schnoberg, 1988, p. 30)

Reviewing the reading:

Even mixed influences and intentions enhance self-reflectivity

Most of the reviewers of *Madame Sousatzka* focuses on the cinematographic depictions of the tensions embodied in the music teacher Madame Sousatzka. These reviewers marvel how Madame in one moment can be manipulative, proprietary, outrageous, demanding, arrogant and imperious, and yet in another moment she is open, facilitating, calm, reassuring, tactful, and committed to the best interests and successes of her students. Sousatzka seems to be that kind of teacher who really fluctuates between destroying and creating. Madame seems as sure of her approach to teaching as she is about her failure as a performer. And still, despite her own traumas regarding the past and her resistance in the present to face that past, Madame's desires, intentions, and influences are directed toward her pupils achieving everything they are destined for.

Through her disciplinary approach Madame stresses the need for her students to obtain a sympathetic, harmonic collaboration between the musical gift they possess, the music skill needed to control and free the gift, and the body-mind harmony required to facilitate the expression of the musical gift. This harmonic coming together exists when a pianist is playing his or her best. As an audience we marvel at the control of the possibility of losing it. In that harmonic moment there resonates something that is beyond form, content, and expression itself. Those trained and talented artists who, on occasion, achieve the right balance are honored as being truly gifted. This harmony is Madame's desire for Manek.

> The movie's main cloth, of course, is the cloistered world of Madame Sousatzka--an indoor universe of jewels, faded silks, candles and photographs of former, and favored students. A combination of Miss Havisham, Blanche Dubois and, quite

> possibly, the Wicked Witch of the East, she educates precocious Manek with fiery rigor. "This is where the music comes from," she tells him, pointing to his abdomen. There will be further spiritual Henry-Higgins counselling as well as predictably climatic recital. But Schlesinger never loses sight of the colorful human threads and he sews his tapestry with a touching conclusion that shows Madame's sad and beautiful world in transition. (Kehr, 1988b, p. 35)

Maslin (1988), Kael (1988), Champlin (1988) Maslin (1988) and others point to several of *Madame Sousatzka's* swirl of contradictory themes. Themes that focus on topics such as, the conforming yet rebellious nature of being an artist, youthful coming-of-age, the tensions of possible latent sexuality, the conflictual manifestations of colonialism and nationalism, music as a gift and as a trainable skill, the sense of community lost and found, the ever-present influence of pending change, of the dynamics of the entertainment industry, of teacher understanding of self, other, and discipline, of parental and teacher conflict, of forbidden desires, and of the contradictory nature of pedagogy itself. These themes are worthy of exploration, as are others not presently named, but I am drawn to questions raised in and by the film regarding the quality of the ambiguity with respect to human nature, the tensions of mixed motives, and the influence of teacher and parental intentionality.

These latter issues are brought forward in the film's concluding encounters between Madame and both Edward and Manek. As these young men, and budding artists, grow physically, intellectually, emotionally, and musically their own awareness of their subjectivity changes. Exploring who they are, and who they are becoming, in turn brings on the possibility of a shift in Madame's understanding of her educative intentions and responsibility. But when Madame's intentions, and subsequent attempts at influence, do not change in any substantial way, she is again confronted by the gaps and absences in her incomplete relationship to her past and to the changing boys presently before her. Madame attempts, initially, to deal with the threat to her personal and professional world by becoming increasingly cruel. It is as if she believes she can demand unwavering loyalty and love from the boys through distancing herself. Such is Madame's lack of self-esteem that is, in turn, perhaps traceable to her relationship with her own mother-teacher. Often influenced by parents in a negative, confining way (despite rhetoric of doing what is best for the children) children sometimes grow up to re-create the way they were treated. But then again many do not. Such is the riddle of the bundle of contradictions, tensions, and polarities that is Madame Sousatzka as child, student, adult, musician, and teacher. The irony in Madame's coming to awareness of her present-past polarized life is that it is her students who have shown her the way to be different with others.

With the images of the wrecker's ball demolishing Sousatzka's world, with her house mates dispersed and relocated, and with the possibility of a new teaching beginning, Madame is brought to face the challenge of change. Madame's early indomitability, determination to pursue her calling in a single-minded way, her defiance of the calls from past heartbreak, her refusal to face the passing of time in a lived sense, and her denial of inevitable antinomic nature of life are all coming to a moment when a different direction is possible. Now she must face, as frightening as that might be, that life has a different intention for her. The lesson Madame seems ready to learn is that even the most traumatic events, situations, and relations if understood pedagogically, open the possibilities to be at home differently once again. The construction process of life goes on even when under the tension of imminent destruction and, in turn, both are often bound up in the interplay of mixed motives that possibility have a pedagogical quality. Intentionality, in the form of other-making and self-making, is a significant theme in *Madame Sousatzka*.

READING THREE: Exploring *Madame Sousatzka* as a deconstructed text

Pedagogical antinomies not only challenge us in daily living they also require of us a reflective response. (van Manen.)

Cinematographically and pedagogically the film, *Madame Sousatzka*, does show many lifeworld realities teachers and parents face in their daily dealings with one another and with children. Taking a lead from Reading One and Reading Two, this reading chooses to focus on the question of pedagogical intent; pedagogical intent being understood as the orientation of a teacher to what is good for the child.

What follows is a series of exploratory readings that focus on cinematographic sites in the film where an adult's understanding of intentionality and responsibility have become disorientated with respect to what is considered to be good for the child. Adults and children live in a contingent world; a world where individual and community history, desires, hopes, fears, and basic insecurities often deflect (consciously or not) an adult's pedagogical responsibility to take care of, and do the right thing for, the child. Some adults become confused with respect to their understanding of the responses required in order to live in the world with children in a way that is good for children. But even in a contingent, mixed motive intentionality there still remains the possibility for pedagogy to occur.

A destruction-construction motif in *Madame Sousatzka*

The decaying tenant house of Lady Emily, and the contrasting revitalization zone that surrounds it, provides a backdrop for the tensions so evident in the confusion of mixed motives that influence the house's life-weathered tenants. Lady Emily's house has become the object of desire for a neighborhood re-development project. The forces that array themselves against the house, and subsequently its tenants, are but part of the persistent myth of creation-in-destruction.

Part of the modern vision demands that individuals and communities must move toward idealized perfection. But a strong qualifier to that demand is that individuals and communities must never forget where they came from. As such, the quest for perfection lives in the tension of the minded desire to project into the enlightened future, and the emotional need for a supportive nostalgia rooted in the past. Nevertheless, the present state of affairs is simply never quite good enough. This dynamic interplay between construction and destruction, building and dismantling, and subsequentially between being at home and becoming homeless frames the film narrative of *Madame Sousatzka*. Lady Emily's home becomes the site where the cycle of being at home and becoming homeless plays itself out.

Into this world, fraught with the mixed motive intentionality of destruction and construction, enters Manek Sen. When the youthful forward-looking Manek enters Lady Emily's house, he enters into a shrine to the past and like most museums "the door is open; always open." This condition of openness makes this house the perfect victim for those who wish to destroy it. But for a short time the house also provides Manek with a cloistered space where he is able to concentrate on his musical gift. In his new learning space Manek pushes himself to perfect Madame's approach to musical proficiency.

But Manek also becomes involved in the lives of the tenants of the house. Each of the tenant's tension-filled existence provides an opportunity for Manek to learn something about himself and other people. With Lady Emily Manek learns that an open heart creates a space for others. In this caring sensitive space it is possible for lost souls to gather and rest, if only for a moment. With Cordle Manek encounters a victimized closet homosexual. Manek learns that Cordle's choices are as limited as the society that persecutes him. With Jenny Manek comes to understanding the dream of being a success. But Manek sees the human cost of attaining a dream in the entertainment industry. In his interactions with the house's tenants, Manek comes to learn that the need to make choices and decisions is brought into fruition by the ever persistent tension of the human desire to construct a life in a world bent on destruction. Simply put, Manek sees that a person may make choices or have them made for him. As such, Manek comes to understand, in a pedagogical sense, that to stand in the world as an example of how to stand in the world can become a catalyst for others.

From Madame Manek learns the importance of building a solid centeredness with his musical gift. If this embodied oneness can be achieved it can become the well of strength Manek will need in order to perform his music. In learning his lessons from Madame, Manek is able to generate enough strength to have Madame encounter the pedagogic opportunity to begin to reconstruct her relationship not only with him, but also with Edward. Significantly, it is as a result of Madame's, albeit mixed motive, construction of Manek as a self-making and powerful artist, that the destruction of the house of cards that is her personal-professional world becomes shaken. In order for Manek to set out to construct his professional career, Madame is brought to face the need to make a choice regarding her way of destructively and constructively being with her students.

Manek, as one who influences and as one who is influenced, comes to see how each person's life in Lady Emily's house, including his own, is rooted in contingencies, tensions, and contradictions. But in the often mixed motive and contingent nature of life, Manek also learns that choices must be made. He sees that choices must be made or they will be made for him. Manek's choice to play a concert sets an example for the others with respect to having the strength to make choices. Manek's existence in the house of Lady Emily enables him to see and experience, through the numerous mixed motives evident in the adults' lives that surround him, the profound lesson that unless a person makes choices life's contingent nature can control a person's life. In fact, contingencies can dominate a person's life to the point of destroying any sense of self and any life-enhancing relations with others. Manek comes to reflectively understand that if the contingent nature of life is faced, emphatically and consciously, there is the opportunity to construct creative possibilities, options that free, and to open horizons. In experiencing the mixed motives of his mother, teacher, tenant-friends, and career manager, it is Manek who comes to know that the contradictory tensions of life that fluctuate between poles like destruction-construction, freedom-control, intervention-withdrawal, and so on are in fact open opportunities as opposed to closed boundaries.

In the tenant house of mixed motives Manek becomes lifeworld wise. He learns about contrasting visions of life--past, present, and future. By being part of what is happening to Lady Emily's home, and by being involved in the lives of those who face the destruction of what they have come to rely on to define their respective sense of self and sense of community, Manek knows he also carries with him an influence that is both destructive and constructive. By being in that space, at that time, Manek comes to understand both the importance of the past and the future. He comes to see the importance of understanding that neither past nor future must supersede or overcome the present. Of the lessons taught in Lady Emily's home, perhaps the lesson Manek comes to know the deepest is that of intentionality.

Within the atmosphere of contingent intentionality Manek is able to use that atmosphere pedagogically by blurring the roles of teacher-student, and parent-child. In this constructive blurring Manek is able to create enough purposeful tension in Madame's teaching and Sushila's parenting such that both are forced to reflectively consider what it means to be a teacher and a parent. The power of reciprocity in a two-way intentional relation between a teacher and student, parent and child, can have dramatic life-giving consequences. By being forced, via his teacher's and his mother's mixed motive disorientations, to act as if he were an adult Manek is able to show Madame, as his teacher, and Sushila, as his mother, that the mixed motives of their intentions for him are actually destroying his existence as a student and as a child. As such, the film concludes on a positive note with both Madame and Sushila appearing far more adult-like than at any point previously in the film. Is it possible that a child who is required to act as if he or she were an adult can create a reflective response in childish adults who are in turn influenced by disorienting mixed motives such that the adults can come to face their forgotten responsibilities for a child?

From intentionality to responsibility as stimulated by *Madame Sousatzka*

The theme of intentionality in *Madame Sousatzka* is a strong one. What follows is an exploration of the word intentionality through a chain of meanings. All the word-link references that follow are from *Funk and Wagnalls Standard College Dictionary* (1975).

Intention: purpose, either ultimate or immediate; intend; goal; design; earnestly attentive.

Intend: hope; expect; to stretch; planned; proposed; results; tend to.

Tend: aptitude; disposition; inclination; watch over; protect; attend to; to be tender.

Tender: offer; give; minister to.

Minister: to act as servant or agent of other; to be authorized.

Authorized: empowered; to be commissioned; attentive to; responsive to.

Responsive: inclined; ready; in accord; reply; harmony, to be answerable.

Answerable: called upon; liable; responsible.

Responsibility: a duty; trust; obligation; answerable to, attentive to, ministering to a purposeful call in an intentional manner.

This connector word exercise attempts to show, perhaps rather simplistically, that much of what constitutes the notion of intentionality is bound to the question of responsibility. In the realm of pedagogical intentions, as opposed to other kinds of intentions, the actions engaged in by a teacher are oriented toward a student with loving care, trustful hope, an authorized ministering, and ultimately a sense of responsive responsibility. In this regard a pedagogically purposeful teacher attempts to be aware of his or her intentions for a student and the power of his or her influence with respect to the student. Teaching, in this sense, is a ministering on the teacher's part grounded in recognition of who the student is while balancing the hopes for who the student can become.

Also critical to the notion of pedagogical intentionality is the way a student understands who he or she is. In the student's seeing of self and other there is often an authorizing influence evident on the student's part that effects, affects, and infects a teacher's intentions for the student. If the educative relationship between a teacher and his or her students is pedagogically authorized, then a student knows that the teacher has his or her best interests at heart.

However, in the film, *Madame Sousatzka*, there are indications that a teacher's pedagogic orientation, just like that of a parent's, may occasionally become deflected or exasperated by negative feelings and thoughts that often dominate some contextual situations. But in a pedagogic manner the film also shows that when a student, and a child, is before the teacher, and the parent, the teacher and parent must act. So even if the actions of a teacher or a parent are deranged or disorientated by mixed motives, the tension between could and should, can and might, in a very pragmatic sense will not go away. This sense of doubting on a teacher's, or parent's, part regarding his or her actions will demand, at some point, a reflective consideration on those actions by the teacher, or parent.

If the teacher's doubting encompasses reflections about his or her actions being good for the child, then the conditions are right for pedagogy itself to influence the teacher's understanding of how his or her influence is influential. This sense of pedagogical doubting in a teacher's personal-professional preparedness becomes a valuable and valued experience for pedagogically sensitive teachers. This constructive opportunity to rebuild a weakened pedagogical relationship begins with the destruction of mixed motive intentionality.

What makes life's antinomic nature so pedagogically intentional is that it continually offers teachers, and parents alike, the opportunity to learn, change, and become. These are the same possibilities teachers and parents hold dear for their students and children. Pedagogy is the opportunity to recover one's sense of understanding with respect to what constitutes pedagogical intentionality and responsibility.

Stimulated by the body work of *Madame Sousatzka*

Manek has a musical gift, but his talents for expressing that gift are raw. The need for training in order to play the music of the Masters brings Manek to Madame. Madame is the guardian of the template by which "it", Manek's gift, must be guided into performance. As a tradition-sensitive music teacher, Madame sees her teaching function as the mediator between the rigid system that honors the need for control, via training, and the gift that seeks freedom of expression. On one hand Madame must do whatever is required to free the gift from Manek's body and allow its expression. On the other hand, she must also make it possible for the musical gift to be controlled. Madame believes, and rightly so, that expression of the kind of gift Manek has, or that has Manek, can only achieve proper harmony through Manek's becoming a disciple of the discipline.

Although widespread appreciation of classical music has declined over the last century, as other forms of musical expression now dominate cultural preferences, it nevertheless remains valued. Classical music is respected for its rigorous mathematical precision, systematic intellectualization, and resolute dedication to structure. But while classical music seeks to privilege these Classical rational elements, there is a presence in classical music for that Romantic irrational quality that truly gifted performers are possessed which adds that immeasurable something special to his or her interpretation of a classical piece. Within the discipline itself, as well as in the student (artist) teacher (master) relationship, and in the wider governing societal context the learning and teaching of classical music is bounded by contradictory tendencies. This contradictory, antinomic tension between order and disorder, control and freedom, in classical music draws attention to the Cartesian-defined mind-body split. And it is into this tension that Manek enters as a gifted music student, and as a young man coming of age bounded by the relationships he has with his mother, teacher, and influential others.

Madame is a recognized expert in the discipline of classical music. She is acknowledged by students and peers alike as a master. And true to form Madame's first insistence with respect to Manek's training is that he can only be a concert pianist if he begins to cultivate a refined sense of sophisticated appreciation of Western culture. In essence, Madame declares Manek to be uneducated and poverty-stricken in his understandings of the intricacies of Western culture. To correct this deficiency, and to begin to learn how to give proper expression to his gift, Manek must read and study in the Western literary and fine art traditions. As well, Manek must begin to dress properly, refine his manner and manners, and manage his selection of acquaintances with the proper degree of distancing. Manek has, according to Madame, 600 years of Western culture to catch up on before he will be able to truly bring a sense of refined precision to his playing. Initially, this Madame-Manek educative relationship seems to feature Madame as master and Manek as servant.

As Madame has pointed out, Manek is not Western. Manek's cultural roots, social traditions, mother language, and his understanding of relationships are not Western. In all the things Madame wishes to refine in Manek such as his dress, table manners, athleticism, food choices, selection of friends and language, and so on, it becomes evident just how significantly different Manek is. This difference is initially seen by Madame as something to be targeted. Madame would suggest that Manek's difference really has little to do with race or gender. She wants to make him into the perfect pianist. Simply Madame seeks to eradicate any qualities that provide order where there must be disorder, or conversely disorder where Madame believes there must be order. Her goal, as a master music teacher, is to ensure that the giftedness Manek embodies achieves qualified expression. But it is in this desire to oversee, manage, and control the tensions between similarity and dissimilarity, other-making and self-making, where Madame does reveal herself as essentially patriarchal. And it is also in the subtle expressions of gender, power, and the mind-body spilt that the question of what it means to be a disciple of a discipline becomes debatable.

Madame's desire as a teacher is to influence Manek's mind, via exposure to the good things of a refined life, and his body, via rigorous training using the Sousatzka method, such that eventually the mind and body will be as one in Manek's playing. In order to achieve her intentions for Manek, Madame often uses the language of management. Punishment and gratification quickly establish themselves as the viable poles ensuring compliance. For example, Manek is rewarded with concert tickets, clothes, books and cookies or, conversely, when his actions are outside the required rules established by Madame he is scolded, has his privileges removed, or is banished.

In these extreme elements of Madame's way of seeing her subject matter and the artist-student there is again the sense that Manek as he is must be destroyed in order to construct something much better. Complimentary to this destruction-construction tension is a vision of an objectified body. As such, there is a need to still or control the body in order to have the mind perform through the body in an effective and efficient manner. Perfection, in this sense, is a controlled physical expression of a minded desire. It is the mind that, if unencumbered by an uncontrollable body, will ensure a performance achieves its idealized peak. The body, again in an extreme sense, is but the necessary vehicle, machinery, or apparatus to accomplish the goal of a perfect performance. It seems reasonable then that the struggle to control the body becomes a power struggle.

Also evident in the tension between control and freedom as depicted in *Madame Sousatzka* is the question of a gender bias. Most of the Masters of classical music are male. The voices of these fathers of the past have provided a template for the control of the present body of knowledge constituting the classical music tradition. But in the film it is the "smuther" of the mother-figure (for example, Madame's pressing Manek's head to her chest) that seeks to desire to have Manek conform to the proper template of what it means to be a classical concert pianist. Both Madame and Sushila desire Manek to be perfect in this regard.

In the later scenes of the film where Madame's doubting of her personal-professional life is backdropped by images of sensuality, is it possible to suggest that Madame has had to adopt some Lady Macbeth-like qualities. To be the guardian of the tradition, an essentially male tradition, has Madame had to de-sex herself? In order to be the kind of demanding, impersonal, and patriarchal teacher her mother was, has Madame been forced to progressively, albeit unconsciously, distance herself from her own womanly sensuality and sexuality? Could her anguish, guilt, and fear over her feelings or thoughts about Edward and Manek be unthinkable thoughts about undoable acts because it would require Madame to reject the protection and power offered in a patriarchal way of seeing the world? Is not a patriarchal way of knowing fortified through distancing, objectification, and hierarchical power? She hides her body in black, and yet continuously, perhaps as a reminder of her sexuality, sprays herself with perfume. Her systematic and technical control of the body (the famous Sousatzka pinch) is stressed in order to achieve the desired degree of musical proficiency and competency in her students. And yet she also requires an artist to have a life commitment to his or her discipline. Madame's life is controlled by her discipline to the exclusion of everything else. In her exclusivity it is as if Madame already were the prototype of the modern male. In much of her vision, style, and expression it is as if Madame seeks the privileged patriarchal quest for Logos, sequentiality, and rationality.

To see how Madame's understanding of the approach to her discipline and to her students changes, it is necessary to return to the film's depictions of the body in general. On the screen there are images of the young vibrant Manek, the sensual Jenny, the frail Lady Emily, the randy Ronnie Blum, the young mother Sushila, the parasitic Pick, the attractive Edward, as well as the homosexual Cordle. Each character, on several levels, culturally, sexually, politically, socially, and so on, is defined by his or her body. Or in most instances the defining qualities of the body have become objectified by hierarchically powerful surveyors. In terms of female characters Madame often seems to have little existence other than that of the body of music that defines her. But in her understanding of music, Madame's surveyor is still her demanding mother. Sushila as the young mother is victimized and must continually weigh offers from men to protect her from her life of turmoil; a life that she was cast into by an exploitive male. Jenny is also subjected to exploitation as a lust object; she must sell her body in the present for a future dream. Lady Emily is seen as a useless body and a barricade to progress. In terms of the male characters Cordle has his body beaten and broken when he acts on his desires. Blum acts on his desires anytime he wishes at the expense of both his wife and his mistress.

Then there is Manek. Manek is a work of art in progress. Manek's body is still being defined and defining itself. And this process of becoming happens within the relationships Manek has with other people. It is with the house's tenants that Manek comes to understand what it means to be embodied and disembodied. But it is also Manek as a boy-man who is the one to re-establish the value of a more balanced relationship between mind and body. Manek's becoming with a body of music and with the body of experiences and knowledge other people can offer, influences Madame to become open to that sense of doubting that will call her to attend to her past.

But it is also Madame's own body that seems to be calling to her. Madame, via her painful flashbacks, is called back to face her past as a child and as a student. Her childhood memories of her demanding mother, and her subsequent failure as a concert pianist, seem to indicate she is unable to resolve, in a pragmatic way (that is to keep playing), the tension between being attentive to the demands for perfection from the classical music tradition and her own sense of human fragility. As a result of that childhood experience Madame's adult teaching focus becomes, not surprizingly, a stress on the ideals of perseverance, toughness, and practice. These ideals are what Madame believes will prevent other young artists from suffering her fate. But unreflective administration of these ideals also provides an opportunity for exasperation and negation, as well as temper and bitterness to enter into Madame's teaching approach. It is ironic how as Manek's "break through" is imminent that Madame's body keeps reminding her of an unresolved past.

What the film seems to play with and make debatable is this tension embodied in Madame such that the question becomes: how can a teacher be attentive, dedicated, and influentially responsible to a theoretical body of knowledge, and yet accept his or her student body in a pragmatic, personal, and pedagogical way? And the film also seems to be asking: is it possible that the tension between a discipline, as a disembodied body of knowledge, and becoming a disciple, as an embodiment of that knowledge, can find a way of coexisting in a workable tension? Is it possible that to be too overtly disciplined by the subject matter at hand may lead to a disembodied existence guided by inert idealism? But, on the other hand, is it possible that too much disciple-like zeal, and intuitive reliance on self as the only interpreter of a body of knowledge, throttles awareness of others and often leads to a binge of hedonistic self-expression?

To be a disciplined disciple of their chosen vocation is what both Edward and Manek seek. In attempting this journey the boys raise questions in Madame's personal and professional lifeworld. These are questions she must respond to as one who professes to embody a way of being a teacher of music. Perhaps that is part of the answer to the riddle Manek leaves Madame. A riddle that involves a teacher coming to understand that he or she is but a guide to a student's response to attend to the vocation that calls. Manek's parting words to Madame are, "I hope it plays as well for him as it did for you." There is something in these words that infers being a disciple of a discipline somehow offers the pedagogical possibility of living in the tensions between romance and precision, specialization and generality, and freedom and control.

As Manek walks away and Edward walks toward, we, as the audience, feel that indeed it is possible now for Madame to be a much more pedagogically sensitive teacher of music students. As such, pedagogical intents are expressions of a person's theoretical, practical, and reflective understandings of who she or he is, and how he or she lives with others and in the world.

So *Madame Sousatzka* closes with the possibility that a teacher or a parent can recover or regain their sense of self-making as a result of the influence of a child-student whose only intention was to make his mother happy and his teacher proud. The film's tension between mind and body, control and freedom, and discipline and disciple creates an opportunity to pedagogically reflect on questions like: What does a parent want for his or her child? What does a teacher want for his or her student? What is the desire embedded in both of these wants? Where do these wants and desires come together?

The above explorations of *Madame Sousatzka* are attempts to suggest that the film itself offers a possibility to make pedagogically debatable the claim that pedagogical intentions, influence, and responsibility as cornerstones of the pedagogical relationship and as rooted in the notion of *in loco parentis* are often confused, deflected, and rearranged by the contingent nature of life itself such that these elements become manifest in an adult's actions as mixed motives. But the film's narrative also suggests that even mixed motives can eventually have pedagogical benefits. This possibility is revealed in the film with Manek, as the child-student, embodying the tension of being and becoming, who also becomes the condition of the possibility for the film's adults to reflectively encounter themselves. The promise of *Madame Sousatzka* is that even in the confusion and disorientation of non-pedagogical mixed motives, there is a possibility that there is a pedagogical intent that indeed strengthens a child's or a student's contingent possibility for being and becoming.

Madame Sousatzka offers an opportunity to see how mixed motives may create non-pedagogical intents, as well as pedagogical intents, and both, if reflectively attended to, can move teacher-student and parent-child relationships on to stronger pedagogical grounds. Pedagogical intent makes a difference in the lives of children and adults. *Madame Sousatzka* shows that certain experiences can prove to be powerful influences. Madame's experience of loss and gain, with both Edward and Manek, sensitizes her to that fact that her students experience the world differently than she does. Perhaps this is a lesson her mother never learned, but is now one that Madame can teach.

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE TRAILER: REVIEWING FORWARD

This study began as an attempt to bring together interests in contemporary North American feature films, postmodern-deconstruction strategies, and the relation between educators and children (the pedagogical relation). Films were discussed as a narrative medium and as a meaningful source of lived-experience data. Interrupted and understood in this way, films invite a viewer (reader) to reflect on, and perhaps to "borrow" from, framed interpretations of human experiences. By bringing felt expressions about a film into reflective articulation, there was an opportunity to make debatable understandings of the constructed meaning, or significance, of an aspect of human experience--in this case the educative relation between an adult-teacher, his or her children-students, and the subject matter at hand.

Stand and Deliver (Menendez, 1989), *Dead Poets Society* (Weir, 1989), and *Madame Sousatzka* (Schlesinger, 1988) were the films used in this study. As such each film was subjected to three different readings. First, there was an interrupted reading of the film as a narrative text. This reading began the transformation of visual text to written text. The reflective interruptions were used to point to emergent themes. Second, there was a reading featuring critical commentaries on the film by movie connoisseurs. These commentaries were used to further enhance the indication of which themes were emerging as noteworthy. The three themes that emerged from each film, and subsequently became the focus of this study, were pedagogical subjectivity, responsibility, and intentionality. Third, each emergent theme, as derived from reading one and two, became the focus of a deconstructive analysis. Although each theme was explored as it emerged via specific film analysis, it was also understood that all three themes are integrated as interactive parts of that which shapes a pedagogical relationship.

By exploring films in the manner advanced here it was possible to see that the educative relationship between a teacher and his or her students reflects the antinomic nature of a human being's continually changing encounters with self, others, and the world at large. In life's inherently contradictory nature there is an unremitting invitation offered to teachers and students. That invitation is framed as a pedagogical opportunity. And within limits this opportunity, when chosen, can lead to the development of a specific and special educative relationship. In a pedagogically-attentive lifeworld-sensitive relationship a teacher and his or her students are able to knowingly make choices regarding the variety of interpretations regarding past, present, and future worlds.

The pedagogical relationship involves self-making and other-making, and simply lives (indeed flourishes) in the tension between a teacher's being and his or her students' becoming. A teacher, as an educational leader in a pedagogical relationship, must be reflectively responsive to the influence of his or her choice-making between proximity and distance, freedom and control, in terms of lived time, space, other and relation. Knowing how and when to respond to children becomes much of what constitutes who a teacher is and what a teacher does.

Much of the value in exploring the educative relationships between Escalante, Keating, and Sousatzka and their students is to see how these teachers are drawn into a condition of reflectively questioning what constitutes a teacher's sense of a child's subjectivity and readiness to learn. Also each of these teachers comes to question his or her understanding of what frames an ethical-moral responsibility to respond to a child's call to become an adult. As well each teacher comes to wonder about the influence of his or her intentionality (motivated actions) that often frames the spaces (both secure and unbounded) a child needs to be and become. Indeed, what the struggle of these teachers shows is that pedagogy makes itself constantly available through an awareness of a sense of doubting and the subsequent questioning of a teacher's experiences with children or young people.

All three teachers in this study are shown encountering reflective moments. Each teacher comes to wonder about what authorizes a teacher-student relation to be pedagogic. This pedagogically-sensitive doubting of the quality of a teacher's relationship with his or her students brings a teacher to reflect on the spontaneous needfulness to do the right thing. Although Escalante, Keating, and Sousatzka have strong, deep, and rich educative relationships with their students, the pedagogical lesson is in their struggle to work out an educationally productive relationship. In the process of relationship building these teachers remind us to be constantly alert to the necessity of being pedagogically sensitive (tactful). A teacher's awareness of the need to respond to a constant doubting and measure of his or her intentionality, sense of responsibility, and competency through his or her actions (and non-actions) with his or her students, constitutes much of what pedagogy calls for a teacher to respond to. Still it is important to note that as each teacher responds responsibly to a student's willingness (or unwillingness) to become an adult, he or she must also deal with his or her students in an ideologically specific world. In fact, each film shows what might be required to face that which would hegemonically seek to make every legitimate and sanctioned educative relationship between teacher and child anything but pedagogical.

It is not only within the pedagogical context of a teacher-student relationship, but within the influential conditions of a larger societal context that a teacher is brought to question his or her understanding of his or her responsibility for, reliability with, and competence with children. A pedagogically-sensitive teacher knows that what he or she intends for a student should not prey upon that student's natural helplessness or vulnerability. What the teacher does (or does not do) must eventually strengthen the child's abilities to encounter his or her emerging awareness of self, other, and the world. The teacher intends for the growing child to eventually assume responsibility to make the choices that are best for the child (or young person) as he or she attempts to become an adult. But this process of pedagogically-intended becoming is often highly contextualized and susceptible to mixed-motive influences.

What is evident in most critiques of the Western world is that the prevailing cultural and social conditions indicate this to be a time and place of significant transition. The dominance of industrial capitalism, instrumental rationality, and positivistic applications of technology, although initially evolved as a reaction to what was seen as a time of darkness, instability, and a loss of vision, has now culminated in universally increasing levels of inequality and exploitation. Most contemporary people feel the world today has somehow, almost instantaneously, become a place of accelerating disintegration and deterioration. There is a prevalent pessimistic feeling that surrounds the belief that the ways of knowing life, the world, and its relations as bound within current social, economic, cultural, and political forms simply cannot be sustained.

The modern-postmodern condition is fraught with attempts to respond to what seems to be modernity's pending sense of closure. As a result the contemporary world is rampant with a kind a hyper-modernism featuring the interplay of expressions of hyper-reality, hyper-activity, and hyper-intelligence. But rather than debating the beginnings of the modern-postmodern tensions, or to explore the different forms this tension is taking, I am interested in the question of the awareness that a significant state of transition is upon us. Accordingly, how are teachers, assumed as representative of the status quo, to encounter and teach children who are already deeply immersed in the modern-postmodern condition? That question, in turn, begs a question about what constitutes, indeed shapes, culture and society. How do we, as individuals, envision our sense of self, other, community, history, and relations?

In the cinematographic interplay staged between Escalante and the ganas kids, Keating and the Welton boys, and Madame with Edward and Manek, and in their struggles with the community at large, there are images and counter-images in the films featuring what might be required in order for a teacher to prepare his or her students to face the present conditions of the Western world. In the films there are images of education conceived of as a response to change that can only be based on clinically-designed applications of instrumentally tactical approaches. In each film there are those who believe in arming children-students with tactics. These tactics should enable children to face and survive the present condition of societal flux. In *Stand and Deliver* (Menendez, 1989) Molina, Coach, Ortega, the Educational Testing Service, and even Escalante early in the film, believe that to survive in the modern world students must be shown to be mathematically skilled and, of course, they must also demonstrate the motivational desire to be successful. In *Dead Poets Society* (Weir, 1989) Mr. Nolan and Mr. Perry are emphatic about what beliefs and competencies are required of the Welton boys in order for them to succeed in the world they are destined for. Similarly in *Madame Sousatzka* (Schlesinger, 1988) there is the early Madame as well as Manek's mother (Sushila) and Ronnie Blum who have specific notions of the knowledge and skills required for Manek to survive and perhaps thrive in the world of professional musicians.

There are also many general images in each film of students being tutored to embrace the vision of what an educationally tactical understanding of life has to offer. For example, there is Escalante's stand and deliver testing, the Prichard method of ranking poetry, and the Sousatzka pinch technique of playing piano. But countering these images of tacticians, tactical preparation, and education as a war of tactics, there are images of pedagogical (tactful) relationships between Escalante, Keating, and eventually Madame, and their students. This is not to say that Escalante, Keating, and Madame do not use tactics or tactically definitive approaches in their teaching. But what becomes evident in the pedagogical relationships shown in the films is that each of the teachers in question comes to the realization that to be strictly engaged in a battle of tactics, as combatively aligned against the tactics predispositions evident in the world at large, can only result in unending victimization of everyone involved. The ganas kids, the Welton boys, and Edward and Manek learn a great deal tactically about what is needed to survive in their respective choice of worlds. But there is no contesting the eventual choice these students overwhelmingly make regarding the value of their pedagogically tactful relationships with Escalante, Keating, and Madame. In their respective relationships with Escalante, Keating, and Sousatzka, the students come to discover and to know what frames a pedagogical sense of self, other, and the world at large. When tactics are necessary, and they often are, they must be framed within a pedagogy of tact. The students come to know, via pedagogical relationships with their teachers, what the difference is when one is tactfully, as opposed to tactically, engaged with others as individually differing human beings.

As teachers of young people we must offer them hope in the face of prevailing crisis. It is possible to be consistently pedagogically sensitivity to others in a world riddled with unprecedented change. It is also possible to have the capacity to care for others even though it is becoming increasingly prevalent that those we encounter, care for, and love move out of our lives as instantaneously as they came into them. There are competencies, tactics, and skills that can enhance the capacity to learn such that the way we learn will always lead us through the tensions of the dichotomous nature of life itself as something seeking both stability and change, order and disorder. It is possible to have the thinking, doing, and reflecting capacities to be in the world (now and in the future) in an interpretive way such that we know what it is that requires us to be distanced in relations with self and others, and yet sensitively know when and how the need for proximity calls us to ourselves and to influential others. In the constant tension of the premodern-modern-postmodern world it is not difference that is the key to life-enhancing relations. In one form or another difference as that which is excluded, or absent, will always be present. What is needed, in an educational sense, is an understanding of what constitutes some properties common, or complementary, that have intrinsic and extrinsic value to us as evolving human beings who desire to live with other evolving human beings. As teachers we can interpretatively frame a way to bring a sense of self into a community of other selves. Within an evolving community we, as teachers, must prepare ourselves and others to embrace, dialogically, intellectually and somatically, those encounters we will surely have with reason, passion, love, hate, memory and forgetfulness.

The films explored in this study seem to indicate that a tactical understanding of life's relations frames the teacher as a tactician who approaches instruction by way of strategies, methods, blueprints, timetables, schedules, or designs. In contrast, a pedagogy of tact frames the teacher not as tactician but as pedagogue. That is as a human being who is pedagogically tactful. And as van Manen (1991) indicates being pedagogical tactful is "to be thoughtful, sensitive, perceptive, discreet, mindful, prudent, judicious, sagacious, perspicacious, gracious, considerate, cautious, careful. Would any of these speak badly of an educator?" (p. 126).

And so this chapter rests and this study pauses with the following words

> The skill of pedagogical perceptiveness inheres in the thoughtfulness and tact we learn through the practice of teaching, but not simply by teaching itself. We come to embody tact by means of past experiences coupled with thoughtful reflection on these past experiences. We reflectively acquire sensitivities and insights in various ways--as through literature, film, stories by children, stories about children, and childhood reminiscences.
>
> Thoughtful reflection is itself an experience. Thoughtful reflection is an experience that gives significance to or perceives it in the experience upon which it reflects. So the significance that we attribute through thoughtful reflection to past experience leaves a living memory that is no less embodied knowledge than are the physical skills and habits we learn and acquire in a less reflective manner. However, this thought-engaged body knowledge of acting tactfully attaches a mindful, thinking quality to our ordinary awareness of our everyday actions and experiences. (p. 209).

In seeing films pedagogically there is an opportunity to reflect on the nature and practice of pedagogy. And to reflect is to make choices. Films offer recollective reflective opportunities. If a teacher's life with children is often enhanced and enriched by reflective experiences, then these experiences can offer new or deeper understandings of how to be with children. Seeing films pedagogically can only enhance our capacity to listen to, to see, and to converse about our relational experiences with children.

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